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"A ROMANCE OF THE MILLING REVOLUTIONS,"

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A ROMANCE

OF THE

MILLING REVOLUTIONS

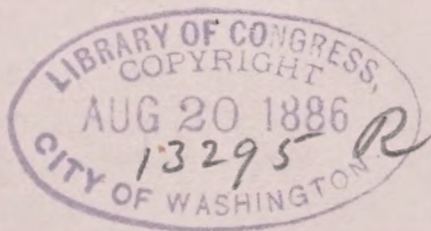
OR

THE HISTORY OF A TYPICAL
MODERN MILL.

BY

"CEREAL."

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1886.

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A · Romance · of · the · Milling · Revolutions.

CHAPTER I.

"It may be all right for spring wheat, but it won't do for winter. That spring wheat never did amount to much anyhow, and when they get hold of something that does a little better than what they're used to, why they've got a big thing. All this talk about new process won't do, and anybody that goes into it will be mighty glad to get out again."

"But I say they're getting more for their spring wheat flour than we're getting for ours, and I believe there's something in it."

"It's just like any other new thing. They get a little money out of it at first, but there's no danger of their ever making any flour out of their spring wheat that's anything like ours. Why their flour is pretty nearly as red as our low grade."

"I don't see that it makes any difference how red it is so that they get the money for it. I would be very willing to see our flour look a little red if I thought we could have a little better business than we've had in the last six months."

Adam Strong looked a little hard and disturbed. He did not like to have his opinions controverted, nor his milling methods questioned. George Moore, his young partner, was a little nervous and irritated because the old man did not see just as he did.

"Well, I'm going to look into this thing," said Moore. "I know that we're not making any money, and I know that those fellows up in Minneapolis are making bushels of it, and every place where they've put in the new process they're doing well, while we're shipping our flour down East and not getting a cent out of it. I tell you I'm going to look into the thing."

"Well, you can look into it all you please, but this talk about new process is all bosh. I've been milling too long to take up with any such nonsense. You'll live long enough to know that you don't want to tear the mill to pieces every time business gets dull."

"Business is not dull to people who are making good flour. It's dull to people who are getting back as we are and getting behind the times."

"Young man, do you think you can tell me how to run a mill? Do you think that I've been in this business for thirty-five years for nothing? I learned my trade before you were born. You came in

here out of school because your old man happened to have a little money. I can run this mill, and when I want any help from you I'll let you know; but I don't want to hear any more talk about this new process nonsense or any of that kind of gammon. I ain't used to being told about my own business by people who don't know anything about it. You do the pen and ink work and I'll run the mill."

The old man was angry, as he usually was after any controversy. Moore did not answer him; as a matter of form he picked up a letter and began to read it, though it was one which had been answered.

Adam Strong gave two or three short angry grunts, got up and walked out of the office—which was in one corner of the mill—and over toward the flour packers.

"Dick, how much low grade did you get to-day?"

"Twenty-five barrels."

"How much high grade?"

"Two hundred and fifty."

"Did you pack the low grade out clean last night?"

"Yes, sir. I pack it all out clean every night."

"There's something wrong with these millers. Too much low grade. Somebody's sleeping around here. Where's Webb?"

"He just went down to start the smutters, I think—there he comes up stairs, now."

"Webb, come here. There's too much low grade here; twenty-four barrels last night and twenty-five to-night. What's the matter?"

"It's not for me to say, Mr. Strong, what is the matter."

"But I want to know what is the matter."

Webb answered slowly. He was a miller of experience, and had been with Adam Strong since the war. "Well, I'll tell you, Adam," said he; "look over my mill, and if you see anything wrong, maybe it's me, and if you don't, maybe you'd better look at the other watch."

Strong looked at his miller in a way to imply that he understood what he meant, but he was never confidential with anyone, not even his miller, in whom he had confidence.

"Dick, when Perkins sends any more of this kind of barrels you send them back. We don't pay him for this kind of stuff."

Just then the wagon drove up to the mill to be loaded with flour, which was hauled to the railroad depot a quarter of a mile away. Strong took a hand in helping to load, as he usually did, though in this instance he was unusually vigorous in his movements. Dick, the flour packer, and the driver had to be very brisk to keep up with the old man. After he had finished he put on his coat and walked down the street. His eyes were cast down; he looked heavy, depressed and uncomfortable.

Adam Strong was on the way to the dam. It was a mile and a

quarter above the mill. He always went there when anything disturbed him, and would stand on the abutment and look at the water as it rushed over the apron. On his way there he passed through the town, and in the present instance went a couple of blocks out of his way and stepped into a store in the public square to get a plug of tobacco. As he turned the first corner, leaving the square, he met Enos Moore, the father of George, Adam Strong's partner. Strong nodded and grunted a salutation as he passed.

Mr. Moore was talking to an old farmer friend, who said :

"Enos, wasn't that Adam Strong?"

"Yes."

"Well, do you know that I haven't seen him in nigh on to twenty years? Sold him my last crop of wheat just before I went to Kansas."

Mr. Moore was one of the early settlers of his county. He came here with two or three hundred dollars from New York state and worked as a farmer for several years, saved his money and invested it in lands, and in due time merged into a banker. As he stood there talking to the old acquaintance whom he had not seen for twenty years, he was the picture of physical vigor and mental contentment—a splendid figure, with clothes that fitted him in good style. He had a neat, clean look, silk hat, clean collar, white cuffs and well-blackened boots.

"Let's see, Enos, what was your second wife's name?" said his Kansas friend.

"I married a lady from St. Louis, a Mrs. Watson."

"Oh, yes, I heard of that. Your first wife was a Cummings, wasn't she, Enos?"

"Yes; Eliza Cummings."

"Well, well, just think of it. Why, Enos, to see you now nobody'd ever think that you'd plowed corn and worked in the harvest field with the rest of us. You worked hard to get your start, Enos, and you've been a good deal more fortunate than the rest of us, too."

"Yes, John, we've seen a good deal of hard work in our time. For my part it's a very pleasant thing to remember. The people who work on the farms as laborers, as you and I have, are the happiest people in the world. The times which were freest from care with me were the times when I was doing farm work for eight dollars a month and board. It is the laboring people and the farm people who have my greatest respect, John. They live the best lives and are the most honorable men and women, the most worthy of respect."

"That's so, Enos, that's so; but our children don't think that way. Well, I suppose little Georgie has grown to be quite a man?"

"Oh, yes, George is twenty-eight years old now."

"Writing for you in the bank, I suppose?"

"No. George just got out of college a couple of years ago; then he thought he wanted to go to Europe for a year, and I sent him, and afterwards he was in the bank with me for about six months, and did quite well. George has got some very good business ideas for a young man. He is in partnership with Adam Strong in the mill."

"In partnership with Adam Strong, is he? Why, I didn't suppose Adam would ever want a partner, he's so kind o' independent like."

"Well, Adam owed us a little more money than we thought he ought to, you know, and I arranged for George to take an interest in the business. Adam has been in need of a business partner for several years."

"Yes, yes; I see, I see. Owed you a little more money than he ought to. George is in partnership with Adam."

"Well, John, come around to the bank before you go back. Always glad to see you. I've got to go over to the court house for a few minutes, now. Good day, John."

"Well, good day, Enos."

CHAPTER II.

Richard Herrick, or Dick, as the men around the mill called him, and his helper were nailing the last load of barrels and piling them ready for the next day's work. George Moore was in the office writing the last letter before going home. The teamster had just come out of the office after having handed over the bill of lading for the last load of flour which he had delivered at the depot.

"Can you tell me where I'll find Mr. Webb?" was asked in a quiet, timid voice, of the teamster.

"He looked up, and hesitated as he saw a neatly attired young girl, standing before him with a basket in her hand.

"Y-e-s—no. Well, I haven't seen him for some time; but I guess I can find him for you."

"Oh, no, you needn't do that. I'll just step inside here, and I expect that I'll find him." Just as she walked into the mill the teamster was recalled to the office by young Mr. Moore.

"Do you know where Mr. Webb is?" she asked of Richard.

"I haven't seen him for several minutes, but I will go and find him," he answered. As he started away he upset his nail-box on the floor, and the hatchet fell behind a barrel.

"Oh, you needn't do that, sir," said the girl, but Richard was on his way upstairs.

In a few minutes Webb came on to the grinding floor.

"Why, how do you do, Lizzie; how'd you get here?"

"Why, Johnnie Briggs went out to hunt the cow and didn't get

back in time to bring your supper, and I coaxed aunt Mary to let me bring it, and if you'll let me I'll bring it all the time. It's a nice walk, and I like to get out of doors."

"Well, we'll see about that, Lizzie. Look out, there! you'll get against some grease. Would you like to look around the mill? Why, what's this? How did Dick's nails get scattered all over the floor? Guess you must have scared him, Lizzie!"

"Why, yes, uncle Ed, I would like to look around the mill a little if you have time. I never was in a mill before."

Webb took the basket and put it where the cats couldn't get at it, and they started to look through the mill. In the mean time Richard had followed Webb down stairs, had walked across the mill so that he could get a good look at the visitor, and was then standing in the side door. George Moore came out of the office and said:

"Dick, who was that young lady who just came in here?"

"I don't know, Mr. Moore. She brought Mr. Webb's supper, I think."

Dick walked over towards the packing floor and gathered up his nails, brushed up a little, walked slowly out of the mill and finally started home.

"Well, uncle Ed, I'm ever so much obliged. I've had a nice time. I must go home now, for I expect that auntie will be anxious about me."

As she came down the stairs on to the grinding floor, George walked toward the door through which she would have to pass, and as she went out he saw her look up quietly with her large brown eyes. She walked toward home slowly, enjoying the freshness of the early spring on this, one of the first warm days. She had a pleasing, graceful figure, and wore a light gray dress and a close-fitting hat. She went past the public square and up one of the residence streets, which was lined with shade trees that were just beginning to show their brightest green. All of the houses were set well back in the yards and were such as belong to well-to-do, comfortable people. Each one bore evidences of being a home, rather than a mere place to live. Among these there was one, perhaps, somewhat smaller than the rest; a low white house with green blinds, a small porch in front and a shed porch on the side at the rear. Then back of this at the side of the lot was an ample woodshed and chicken coop. Back of the kitchen was an ash-hopper. This house was owned by Edward Webb.

Lizzie found her aunt sitting at the window of the front room, an unusual thing for her to do. She was more often found in the dining-room or kitchen.

"Why, Lizzie, I was afraid that something had happened to you. I was just getting ready to go out and hunt you up."

"Uncle Ed showed me all through the mill. He showed me where the wheat went in and where the flour came out, and I am going to take his supper to him every night."

"Oh, no, child, you don't want to do that."

"Yes indeed I do, though, auntie."

"Well, we'll see. Did you stop at the post-office, Lizzie?"

"No, I didn't. I forgot all about it—I forgot that you asked me to, but I will go right back."

"No, no. Just wait until we shut up the house and we'll walk back together."

"I don't know what made me forget it. I was thinking about something else, I guess. It's so pleasant this evening—so warm and nice that I walked along and didn't think about anything very much."

"Poor child, I am glad you don't; I am glad that you are happy," and they walked out at the front gate together and down the street toward the post-office.

Edward Webb had owned this property for several years. He was a quiet, steady man of no great force of character, yet one of the pleasantest and most agreeable of men. He was more than ordinarily well posted, thoroughly honorable, mild mannered, and was highly respected in the community in which he lived. He had saved quite a proportion of all that he had ever earned. His wife had always done her own work in the kitchen, and was economical and painstaking in all her habits. They had never had any children, and having Lizzie with them was more than ordinary joy. It happened in this way:

Two years and a half before this time Lizzie's mother had died, and her father, who was a commercial traveler of something more than average ability, and received a good salary, placed her in a boarding-school. He was the only brother of Mrs. Webb. The nature of his business kept him away from his daughter a great part of the time, and his death, which had occurred some two months previous, at a hotel in Denver, was by no means as great a shock to her as was that of her mother, though she felt it keenly. As his habits were not accumulative, she was forced to leave the boarding-school soon after his death. She felt disposed to the change, notwithstanding this fact. After the burial of her father she remained for a few weeks in the family of one of her school friends. Her aunt offered her a home with her, and at the first convenient opportunity she made the journey, in company with a business friend of her father's, to her aunt's home, where she had arrived a few days before the incidents occurred which form the opening of our story.

After Lizzie left the mill Edward Webb stood in the door and followed her with his eyes as long as she could be seen. For several minutes he stood wrapped in thought, and anyone who knew him

could see his thoughts were far from unpleasant. He turned and went back into the mill, took down his basket and began to eat his supper, failing to make provision for the cats which were mewling and crying at his feet, which was an unusual thing for him to do.

During the next hour and a half his attention was particularly required in caring for the mill, at the end of which time he went to the front door for a little rest. Here, to his surprise, he found Adam Strong sitting on a block near the entrance.

"Pleasant evening, Adam."

"Yes, rather."

"Think it's going to rain to-morrow?"

"Shouldn't wonder if it did."

"Good head of water to-night."

"I was up to the dam and raised another gate."

Conversation did not move very easily between Adam and his miller. Dick came around as was his custom every evening before going home for the night, and, as he had something particular on his mind, he did not take in the situation. After a few preliminaries he said:

"I was in at Field's store to-night, and he had some flour from Emmett's mill, down here at Green City."

"Why, that's strange," said Webb; "was it the 'Lily White?'"

"No, it was some new kind of flour. He said that it was called a new process, and Field said that it was made in some new kind of a way — was made out of middlings and was better than the other flour."

"Bah!" said Adam.

"I got him to give me a little of it, and I thought that we would look at it in the morning."

"You'd better let it alone and attend to your packing." With this Adam Strong walked through the mill, out at the side door and toward home.

"Wonder what's the matter with the old man to-night," said Dick; "I don't like the way he spoke to me — don't like to be talked to in that way."

"Something appears to be worrying him. He's been in bad shape all the afternoon. Where's that flour, Dick?"

"Why, it's in my pocket. Do you want to see it?"

"Yes, I'd like to look at it."

"What is this new process, Mr. Webb?" asked Dick.

"I don't know much about it, only what I hear people say, and what I read in the milling papers, but they've got some kind of a way of cleaning the middlings on a machine, taking the bran and the red stuff out and then grinding it."

"Is it the same kind of middlings you grind here?"

(In this mill they ground the stock which came through a No. 6 cloth on a burr and made a second grade of flour out of it.)

"Yes, I guess it's a good deal the same, but then they have a different way of handling it. That's what they call the new process. While I think of it, Dick, you'd better not say anything more about the flour down to Field's. It seems to worry the old man."

"Should think it would worry him, bringing flour here from Green City and selling it right under his nose. Do they have to build mills all over when they make flour that way?"

"No, I guess they just put in the machines and clean the middlings, and then where mills are fixed like ours that's about all they have to do."

CHAPTER III.

It was about half past five o'clock in the morning. The miller was standing by the husk-frame rubbing his eyes. A great steam obscured from view nearly everything in that end of the mill. It was like a fog. The posts, the spouts, the elevator legs, the hoops to the burrs, all were uncertain in outline when viewed from the other end of the mill. This steam came from the burrs. They were grinding fast—very fast and very close. One putting his hand in the spouts as they left the burrs, if unaccustomed to the experience, would withdraw it quickly, because of the great heat. This mill had made many phenomenal runs, in which it had turned out large quantities of flour. Adam and his millers were wont to refer with satisfaction to the week in which they made eighteen hundred and fifty-two barrels of flour on four run of wheat burrs. "And we cleaned it up well," said the miller on the second watch; "we didn't take much time for burr dressin', but we got through just the same."

This was the largest run that they had ever made. There were others, which were approximately near eighteen hundred barrels, all of which were referred to with some degree of pride. During the last year, however, the demand for flour had not required such wonderful performances.

The miller, Bill Peters, took up his broom and began to sweep. Adam expected him to have the husk and the floor around it clean when he came to the mill at six. He brushed the flour together—and there was not a little of it—sifted it and fed it slowly into the eye of one of the stones. Occasionally a barrel nail, which had passed through a hole in the sieve, would cause the burr to thump and pound for an instant.

"Hello, Bill, how are you making it?" said Dick.

"About as usual. You're a little early this morning, aint you, Dick?"

"Yes, a little. Got up this morning to go coon hunting."

"Late in the season for coons, Dick; soon be getting summer coon-skins. Where do you find them?"

"Oh, I just go up the bottom here, and find them about daylight as they come down and paddle around in the mud and shallow water for crawfish. Did you ever see coons hunting for crawfish, Bill?"

"Well, I don't know as I ever did. Never took much stock in coons, nohow."

"Well, I tell you it's mighty funny. They'll wade along in the mud and water, and when they get it so thick that they can't see they'll stick their noses up in the air just like they were thinking about something, and fumble and scramble around and act as wise as George Moore did the first time he put his hand into a sack of farmer's wheat."

"How do you get the coons, Dick?"

"I shoot them."

"Shoot any this morning?"

"No, I didn't get any this morning, but I shot a muskrat up there just inside the head-gates. They say that you can get ten cents apiece for their tails by taking them to the court-house. What do you think about that, Bill?"

"I don't know much about it, but I guess you can't do it. I remember up in the part of the country where I came from they used to have a law about woodchucks. In one county they give ten cents apiece for their tails, and in the other county next to it they give ten cents for the heads. The boys used to take all the heads to one place, and the tails to the other, so they got twenty cents apiece for their woodchucks, and——d——d if that ain't the old man coming down stairs! What does that mean?"

Dick moved off towards the packers. He knew what it meant. He knew that Adam Strong had gone up stairs without the miller's knowing it, and he judged from appearances that he had come down with something on his mind.

"Bill, do you know what this mill's doing?"

"Yes, sir, I think I do."

"Well, I think you don't. I was just up stairs while you was standing there gasing and blowing to Dick, and I found things in a mighty bad fix."

"What's the matter?"

"What's the matter! Why, everything's the matter. Your returns are soft, and you are running lots of flour over into the low grade and lots into the feed! This thing's been going on here most too long."

"Oh, I was just feedin' in a lot of stuff from a choke. An eleva-

tor bucket got choked and stopped the elevator. Had to feed in the stuff."

"Look y' here, Bill, I don't want you to tell me any such stuff as that. I can tell from the low grade flour and the feed. This thing has been going on for more than one night. You're a getting too lazy to go up stairs, and are letting things take care of themselves, and I guess I don't need you to run this mill any longer."

"Well, I'll tell you, Adam Strong, I've run in my time just as good a mill as yours dare be. I learned my trade where your kind of millin' wouldn't pass, and nobody said I was lazy, either."

But Adam did not hear the last of this speech. He turned to leave almost as soon as he had told his miller that he didn't want him. He did not waste words with a discharged employee.

"Dick, you ought to know better than to be standing around blowing to the millers."

"I think I do, generally."

"Your business is packing flour. Been to breakfast?"

"No, sir."

"Well, go and get it, and when you get through go over to Webb's house and tell his wife that I would like to see him as soon as he gets up."

"All right, sir."

"Guess you want me to run my watch out don't you?" said the miller.

"Do as you please about that."

"Well, when a body talks to me like a man and treats me like a man, why I treat him like a man, but when they come sneaking round and a talking to me like they was a talking to a dog, why, I can be just as mean as the next one. You can take your old mill and run it. I was goin' to quit you Saturday night, anyhow."

Dick was a little ruffled, still he thought that he had gotten off easier than he might have expected. But there was the other fellow, who was discharged.

"I knew from the way the old man looked last night, that there was going to be trouble," Dick said, as he sat down to breakfast. "When he gets stirred up that way he seems to be all pent up; never comes round all right till he discharges somebody. He'll feel better now, and we won't have much trouble again for some time. But still, I don't know either; the old man's worse that way than he used to be when I first went to work for him."

"Well, Richard, just you go along and tend to your work, and don't interfere with any body else's. Let other folks' work alone and you will get along all right, Adam Strong or no Adam Strong. You never find anybody so chrochety or so easily riled up that they

don't like to have people around them that does their work right; so you just go along and pack your flour and you'll not have any trouble."

This was said by Mrs. Herrick, Dick's step-mother.

"Guess that's so, mother, but to tell you the truth, I was standing there gasing with Bill Peters, when the old man came up and turned him off."

"Well, you mind what I say and you won't have any trouble, Richard. Who's Adam Strong going to get to run his mill instead of Peters?"

"I don't know. He's got some kind of an idea in his head. He told me to eat my breakfast and go and tell Mr. Webb to come down."

"Well, make haste, then, and get back to the mill as soon as you can, and you tend to things mighty sharp to-day, Richard."

Dick finished his hasty breakfast; he was a little excited and couldn't eat much. He took his hat from a chair in the dining room and started on his errand.

"Here, Richard, take an apple," said his mother, as he went out of the door, "you'll be hungry before noon."

When Dick arrived at Edward Webb's house, he went around to the kitchen door. The door was open but no one was in that part of the house. He knocked. Lizzie Gardner came to the door.

"Is Mrs. Webb in?"

"Yes, she will be in in a minute. She's out milking the cow. Won't you sit down?"

"Oh, no, I'll just stand here," and Dick swung himself over on to one leg and put his hand up to the door frame and looked uncomfortable.

"No, no; come in and sit down," and she placed a chair near the door.

Dick took the seat that was offered him, but it didn't appear to fit him.

In the midst of his squirming Mrs. Webb came in with the milk.

"Why, good morning, Richard. Anything wrong at the mill?"

"Yes, a little. Mr. Strong wants Mr. Webb to come down as soon as he gets his breakfast."

"What's the matter — anything broke?"

"No, nothing broke. Mr. Strong and Peters had some words, and I guess Mr. Strong told him that he didn't want him any more."

"Well, he'll be getting up pretty soon, and I will tell him. Have a drink of warm milk, Richard?"

"Don't care if I do — just a little."

Lizzie went to get a cup, and held it while her aunt strained into it the warm milk.

"Richard, this is my niece, Lizzie Gardner, who has come to live with us."

Richard mumbled an inaudible something, drank his milk and left the room, saying "Good morning." Lizzie smiled pleasantly.

CHAPTER IV.

Adam Strong took the mill until Webb came down.

"Webb, I came down here this morning and found things in bad shape, and I told Peters that we didn't want him any more, and now we've got to get another miller. Do you know where we can get some one?"

"Why, yes; since the dam went out over there at Boggstown, old Isaiah Parker has been out of a job."

"That's so. Supposing you go down to Williamson's stable and get a horse and wagon and go over there and get him, and I'll run the mill till you get back."

It was only four miles over to Boggstown; the roads were dry, and Webb was soon there. He found his man, as he had expected, sitting in front of a store across the street from the mill.

"Why, good morning, Webb, what're you doing over here?"

"I'm after you, Isaiah. We're wanting a miller, and I thought I'd come over and get you. Can you go back with me?"

"Well, I don't know. I had a little job around home I was thinkin' o' doing, but I guess it don't make no sort o' difference about that, and I believe I'll go over with you." It was not long until he was ready and they were on their way back to the mill.

"Well, I suppose you got your burrs in pretty good order after the dam went out, Isaiah."

"Yes, I did, Webb, that's so. I've been a dressing burrs now for nigh on to forty year, and, without saying too much for myself, I think I know something about fine stone dressing."

"What dress have you got in, Isaiah," said Webb.

"Oh, I've got in my old Maryland dress—the one I learned from my old boss. You see, on a four-foot stone I put in twenty leadin' furrows with an inch and a quarter draft to the foot, and the furrows one inch wide at the eye and an inch and a half at the skirt. Then I put in twenty furrows of the same breadth, givin' them the same draft as the leadin' furrows, cuttin' them in twelve inches from the skirt. Then I cut the short furrows from that into the leadin' furrow at an angle o' forty-five degrees towards the eye of the stone. You know what forty-five degrees is, Webb? It's just like cuttin' across a square."

"Yes."

"I say that some things is absolutely necessary to make a high grade of flour. The furrows must be dressed smooth, and I tell you

that's where lots of millers are wanting. Smooth furrows takes lots o' time."

"Well, about the furrows," said Webb, "I always make them as smooth as I can with a pick. I never used a rubber or anything of that kind, and I don't know much about it. There's a good deal of difference about burr dressing, and a great many people that have different ideas manage to get along pretty well—all of them do. One miller says 'dress your burrs fine,' and another gives exactly another idea. I think that it is necessary first to find out the kind of stock there is in your burr and the kind of wheat you intend to grind, and then you know how to dress. I think the main point is to have the burr in perfect face, or as near so as it is possible to make it."

"Yes, there's lots o' difference, but if a man isn't to go by experience what is he to go by? After a man has been dressin' burrs as long as I have he ought to know something about it. If he can't learn by dressin', why, how can he learn? Our forefathers knew somethin' about millin', and you know we have to take the experience of everybody. Millin' is a science, Webb, and if a man don't study the science of millin', why he'll never do much, that's all. Now there's those that believe in a heavier draft than I do, but a heavy draft discharges the meal too fast, so that you must run too close to get your bran clean. Now, my draft isn't too heavy, and it isn't too light, and I don't have to run it so close but I can just clean my bran and leave my flour bright and lively. But I'll tell you what I've done; I've made a hundred and twenty barrel of flour on one pair of four-foot burrs in twenty-four hours; and then there's another place where I run a three-and-a-half foot burr with a small stream of water and made from seventy-five to eighty barrel of flour in twenty-four hours. What experience has taught me I know. How do you crack your burrs, Webb?"

"Oh, I generally crack them pretty light near the skirt, and a little heavier towards the eye. But then the stone's got a great deal to do with that. I believe you ought to regulate the fineness of the dress according to the quality of the stone. Let the dress be wider and heavier in a hard, close stone, and finer and lighter in an open stone. Every stone ought to have grit or natural sharpness, but if it hasn't got it you have got to give it to it with a pick. If you make a dress too heavy, why, you pulverize the bran, and that of course will make poor flour."

"Yes, that's so, but I guess I believe in a little more crackin' than you do. I believe that every stone ought to be cracked, and cracked all over. I believe in a clear, fine crack, forty to forty-eight to the inch. My old boss could put in sixty that looked just as clean and fine as hairs. But to do fine crackin' without breaking the face of the stone a miller must have practice, and time, and lots o' good picks, which he

must keep true. Then if he can't crack clear, he'd better not try to crack so fine, or he'll break the face. Where you've got plenty of fine cracks, and got 'em all over the burr, why, you don't have to grind so close, if you do you'll kill the flour; but if you want to clean your bran, or if a part of the stone is smooth, then you've got to come down on it, and then you kill your flour."

"I never saw a miller who could put in forty-eight cracks to the inch."

"Well, do you see me? I can put in forty-eight cracks to the inch, and there was a miller that used to live in my part o' the country that could put in seventy, they said. I never saw him do it, but they said he could do it."

"I never saw a burr that was cracked very fine that was in face." And thus it continued until they reached the mill. Parker was positive and somewhat arrogant in speech, while Webb had a quieter but more reasonable disposition, and was not inclined to antagonize the old miller, or to say anything which would make the conversation any more spirited.

They arrived in town in time to eat dinner at Webb's house and get to the mill a little after twelve o'clock.

CHAPTER V.

Some two or three months had passed — uneventful months. That is, the mill had been running most of the time. The stops, such as they had been, had only lasted a few days. Trade had not been very good — "But then, you know, it never is, this time of the year," said Adam. In the steady running of a mill we find the uneventful period; it is the normal condition of things. The shutting down is an incident, an occasion to refer to. "You remember," says one miller to another, "the time that we were shut down to clean out the race," or "the time that we burnt out the step in the water wheel," or something of that kind. Such incidents are like the marks on the dial of a clock. In a miller's memory it was "just about a week before we stripped such and such a wheel," or about "a month after we put a new tail cloth on the lower reel."

As we look into Adam Strong's mill this time we find it stopped. As we walk across the floor there is a hollowness of sound, a lonesome, unnatural sound, which is depressing and disagreeable to one who is accustomed to being about the mill during its running period, the period of its life. In contrast with this, we have the period of its death. In this instance we look for the undertaker, and find him in the person of Peter Wilkins, the millwright. He is sharpening his chisels; he is in no great hurry, and his movements are deliberate.

He has the oil stone before him, and he rubs and then examines the edge of the tool critically by drawing his thumb across it in a way to make a sensitive person shiver.

"I've had that chisel five years this coming spring, Webb," said Wilkins.

"Never loaned it much then, did you?"

"Loaned it? No, I guess not. I never loan the tools that I work with. People that want to borrow tools as a general thing don't know how to use 'em, for if they knew how to use 'em they'd have 'em of their own."

"I guess that's so."

The work on the chisel was about finished. Examinations were more frequent. He ran his thumb over it for the last time, whipped it across the palm of his hand, wiped it with a handful of shavings which he had made in constructing some trusses, and then took out a saw, to file it. He was there to fill a wheel, and all of the preliminaries had to be gone through with.

"I bought that saw," he said to Webb, "when I put in that new bolt in old man Merrill's mill. He come to me one night about half past nine — it was when Lizzie's first baby was two months old — and he said, 'Pete,' says he, 'I'm a thinkin' about puttin' another bolt in the old mill; what do you think of it?' 'Well,' says I, 'I have always been a great believer in plenty of boltin'.' Says he, 'what do you think it will cost?' And said I, 'I don't know, but I'll tell you what I'll do, Uncle Bob,' says I, 'I'll just do it as cheap as it can be done, and when we come to settle I know we'll have no trouble.' And says he, 'Pete I guess you had better go ahead and do it.' And if I do say it myself, I don't believe there's a better bolt in this part of the state. I hadn't much more than got through that job when I went over to Boggstown to fill a wheel just about like this 'un. That was about two months before Isaiah Parker went there. They had a miller then by the name of Bill Spurgeon. He fell out of the back winder and struck his head in the tail race when there was no water in it, and was never much good after that."

"Didn't it kill him?" said Dick, who was helping Webb change some elevator buckets.

"No, but it used him up pretty bad. He always claimed, after that, that somebody pushed him out, but I never thought they did, and neither did anybody else. I guess he was settin' there in the winder and got to dozin' and dropped out."

After this there was a little pause, but not long. He commenced again like this:

"Fillin' a wheel is a mighty particular job; somethin' a man's got to take his time to. If it ain't done just right it'd a good deal better

not be done at all. When I get through fillin' a wheel it's done right. It's the kind of a job I like to do. Don't allow nobody to tell me nothin' about fillin' a wheel."

Then there were reminiscences about wheels which he had filled and filled right, and wheels which had been filled by other parties and had not been filled right, and of the dire consequences which had befallen mill-owners where there had been too much haste in such an operation. After the saw had been filed he had occasion to cut a piece off from a four-inch stick. The piece dropped on the floor, and he picked it up and squinted at it in a quizzical kind of a way, looked at Webb in an authoritative spirit, and said :

"Well, sir, this is the hardest piece of wood that I ever saw."

Webb said nothing, but remembered that he had heard the same Peter Wilkins say the same thing about every piece of hard wood that he had ever cut. Noon came, the trussles were made, the chisel had been sharpened and the saw filed.

In the afternoon, while George Moore was sitting in the office writing a letter, a tall, well-dressed man, wearing a silk hat, walked into the office. Moore stood up and took his card.

"Ah, Mr. Cooke, how do you do, sir? When did you leave New York?"

"The 19th of last month. Is this Mr. Moore?"

"Yes, sir. Be seated."

"I met your partner, Mr. Moore, when I was through here some three years ago. How do you find business?"

"It's only fair. How is business in New York?"

"Well, I've been away from home some time, you know, and am not very well posted, but I judge it's fairly active just now."

"Which way have you been, Mr. Cooke?"

"I have been up through the Northwest."

"Pretty busy up that way?"

"Yes, they're crowding things very strong. The new process is a great thing for the spring wheat country. They're getting good prices for their flour."

"What do you think about new process on winter wheat?"

"I think it's exactly the thing. Everybody who has tried it has proved it so, though of course there is not so much change as there is on spring wheat, but I think that you will all have to come to the new process. The market is the place to judge these things after all. The flour that brings the most money is the kind to make. What is your idea?"

"I think the man who sells the flour knows more about that than we do."

"There's something in that," said Mr. Cooke, "but of course the

millers always has to weigh the selling price and the cost price together; but I understand, from talking to millers who are making new process flour, that there is not a great difference in the cost. The yield is a little higher than by the old way, but then there is more than the difference in the selling price, and quite a little more, too, allow me to say."

"My business experience is limited, but I am inclined to think that one kind of business is no different from another as to general principles, and that if one has goods he wants to sell, he must furnish whatever the people want. The best and most prosperous business, as I understand it, is brought about where both parties in the trade are satisfied."

"That's it exactly."

"If I make a flour that your customers want and are well satisfied with, they come again, and I am able to sell at a profit which they are glad to pay to get the right kind of goods. As I understand it, this principle applies to all kinds of trade. My partner is not favorable to new process milling because he knows more about the other. He says there is no reason for a change; that the old milling is good enough."

"Yes, that's the way a good many of them talk. Pretty hard for them to change."

"One thing is very clear to my mind, and that is that we have got to change our mill or get out of the business. Why, there's a mill a little way from here, down at Green City——"

"Yes, I know them."

"——as you know they put in new process about four months ago, and we begun to hear of the flour right away, and it wasn't long before they began to send a little of it up here. I think it's a little over two months ago. Since that time there has been more of it sold right along, until now it is beginning to seriously affect our local business."

"Emmett, of Green City, makes a tip-top flour. We handle it, and could sell twice as much of it if we could get it."

Just then Adam Strong stepped in.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Strong?"

Adam extended his hand with an inquisitive look.

"But maybe you do not remember me; my name is Cooke, of Falin & Co., commission merchants, New York."

"Oh, yes, I remember you, but I couldn't exactly place you; we see so many of 'em. How's business in New York?"

"Well, as I was telling your partner, I have been out since the nineteenth of last month, and am not very well posted, but I judge that business is moderately active. I see that your mill is not running, Mr. Strong."

"No, we shut down to fill a wheel. New York has been a dull market for us lately; but then it generally is this time of year."

"Oh, I don't know. the demand for flour has been better this last spring than for some time past. You ought to be doing pretty well there now."

"I've been telling Moore, here, that I didn't think our house down there was doing just right by us. We used to get about as good as there was in the market, and now we don't do it. Have you looked at our flour?"

"No, I have not, but I would like to."

"I'll go out and get a sample," said Moore. "Here, Dick, come and let down the packer for me."

"Don't you think that new process is cutting into you a little, Mr. Strong?"

"No, I don't. That new process business is all a humbug, and will soon die out."

"Maybe that is so, Mr. Strong, but, viewing it from my end of the line, I think you are mistaken."

"A man who makes flour ought to know something about that. This kind of millin' is older than you or I, and people have been thinkin' about it a good while, and it ain't something that's to be thrown away in a day. Wiser men than them that has to do with the new process of millin' has worked out the old millin', and it stands to reason that somethin' that has been worked out in years is not all goin' to be thrown away in a day, or all at once. If we ever get anything better than this kind of millin', which I don't say we may not, we'll not get it all in a hurry; we'll get it in the same way that we got the old kind—by long years of experience."

"I don't know anything about milling, Mr. Strong. My business is to sell flour, and I think I know the kind that sells best. I know who buys the flour; I know what they pay for it, and I know what they do with it, and the difference in price between the old process and the new process on winter wheat, to say nothing about spring, will make any man rich in a short time."

"I think that the man who sells flour knows more about the kind to make than we do, Mr. Strong," said Moore, who had returned with a sample from the packer.

"I have never felt any need for their advice."

"Considering the condition of our business, Mr. Strong, I would say that we need some advice just now."

"Oh, well, gentlemen," said Mr. Cooke, interrupting, "this thing will come out all right; let's look at the flour. But I'll tell you, Mr. Strong, I don't think you millers visit the markets enough. There is no place like New York to see the kind of flour that your neighbors are making, and to see what they are getting for it. I would be very much pleased to have you go to New York with me when I return,

which I shall do immediately on reaching Chicago, and see just the kind of flour people want, and to hear what the bakers and the people who use flour have to say about it. I think you will find out something about the wants of flour buyers and flour users which you cannot find out at home. Of course there are things here which you cannot find out in New York, about the cost and all that."

"Yes, and that is a very important matter," said Strong.

"I would be very much pleased if Mr. Strong would do as you suggest. I can think of no better time to do it than now," said Moore.

"I can't afford it," said Strong.

"Oh, you should go as a matter of firm business — go for the firm. This is not a personal matter."

"I haven't been East in twenty years," said Strong. "I was born just ten miles from Philadelphia."

"Ah, indeed! Then it would be pleasant for you to go at this time."

"I'll think about it," and he went out into the mill.

He returned immediately to the office, and said: "I'll see you again, Mr. Cooke. Moore, I am going up to the dam to shut down a gate; there's too much water coming down," and the old man walked up the race bank with his slow, steady pace, his stolid face more stolid and thoughtful than ever. He stood on the abutment and looked into the water. It was there that he did his thinking.

"I think the old man will go," said Moore, as Strong left the office. "He's gone up to the dam now to stand there on the abutment and look into the river and think about it. That's the only bit of sentiment that I've ever been able to recognize in the old man. To see him stand there and look and dream, as he does sometimes, listening to the water roar—why, I would think that he was in love, if it wasn't that he was married and was too old."

They both laughed.

"But, seriously, Mr. Cooke, you have done me a very great service, and if the old gentleman goes, as I think he will, and I intend to insist on it, why you show him the true state of the flour market—show him the flour that is bringing the money. Tell him where it is made, if you know, and when he gets home I'll drag him out, and he and I will go and visit the mills."

"As I said to him," replied Cooke, "there's no place like New York to find out what your neighbors are doing, and if it is possible to convince any living man as to what he ought to do with his mill, he will be convinced by what he sees, without any one saying anything to him. It's as plain as the nose on your face."

During the latter part of the conversation Cooke had been examining the flour.

“In regard to this flour, Mr. Moore, I think I have a trade for just about such flour as this. It’s an up-river family trade. They’re not all acquainted with the new process yet, and I think I could place some of it for you.”

“Well, we might try a car-load or two. What do you think you can get for it?”

“Well, I’ve been away from home for some time, but, as I said, I’ve got a place for flour just like that. I’ve got a peculiar trade for it, but I think that it ought to bring \$——, if it was on the spot to-day. I will send you a brand as soon as I get home.”

“Can we not use one of ours?”

“Oh, no. I think we’d better send you a brand, then we can just keep it for that trade.”

“Some one looking for you there, Mr. Moore, I think.”

“Excuse me.”

George put on his hat and coat and went out to the carriage. His step-mother was there with a young lady whose face he could not see at once.

“You are acquainted with Miss Gardner, are you not, George?”

“Oh, yes. I have met Miss Gardner here at the mill several times.”

“I have discovered in Miss Gardner a very talented musician. She sings and plays most beautifully, and I have begged her assistance in our Sunday school entertainment next week, and in which she has kindly interested herself. I called to say, George, that if it is convenient we would like to have you come to supper a little earlier this evening.”

“Certainly. Miss Gardner, we are very much in need of some one who can help us out in our music.”

“I’m afraid I can’t do much, but I am glad to do what I can. Do you like music?”

“I like it very much, and I think I appreciate good music, though I have no ability myself.”

“If you know really good music I shall be afraid to play where you would hear it, and besides I’m much out of practice.”

“What time do you wish me to come, Madam?” said George as they prepared to leave.

“Be there a little after five o’clock, if you can.”

At the use of the word “madam” in this way, Lizzie raised her eyes, just a little, and in an instant figured out the true relation, Mrs. Moore being George’s step-mother, and that he did not recognize the relation as being altogether satisfactory to himself. He was very respectful, as she saw, but in no degree affectionate.

CHAPTER VI.

Adam Strong went to New York. He did not go as quickly, however, as his partner would have had him. Mr. Cooke left for Chicago on the evening following their conversation as to the projected journey, and while Adam had agreed to go, he could not promise to meet Mr. Cooke in Chicago and make the trip with him. Two or three days was too short a time to change the course of his regular movements, and then he had to have some new shirts, his wife said—and she had to make them—and a new suit of clothes. He had to think about it all, had to say two or three times that “he didn’t think he ought to go, it was no use,” and all that. But he did go. He had a new gray suit and a new pair of boots and a new white hat. Under his turned-down collar, which was home-made, there was a heavy silk neck handkerchief. With his heavy carpet-sack and the encumbrance of an entirely new outfit, he looked uncomfortable and disagreeable. He would straighten his neck around and twist it as though he wanted to stretch it out of the collar.

As to his experience in New York, we will not follow him. He was gone quite three weeks. He was in the city about a week, and the rest of his time was spent in visiting people at his old home in Pennsylvania.

George Moore was in the office on the evening previous to Adam’s arrival. His mind was in a state of expectancy and hope. Adam had not written anything about the flour or about the prospect of a change. Moore took this to mean that the old gentleman had become convinced, but did not like to acknowledge it. He felt sure of the outcome, however. Adam arrived late that night, and the next morning was wandering about the mill in that uncertain way which is usual to those who have been away from the line of their regular work for a time, and who, when they return, have more or less difficulty in taking up their work where they left off. They do not see anything waiting for them; they do not know just what to lay their hands to; they feel lost. It is a disagreeable sensation. Adam went through the mill and found it about as he had left it. The office was about the same as usual, and there were others who were doing the work that he had been accustomed to do before he left. To an old man, with fixed habits, one who had been used to coming into the mill every morning and of knowing exactly what he wanted to do, or knowing that he did not want to do anything, the situation was annoying, almost disturbing. His partner came in a little early that morning, and grasped him by the hand quite vigorously. It was something more than an expression that he was glad to see him—it was that and more too. It meant, as George thought, that the time had come when they were about to

make a business change to which he had looked forward. This being a time when his hopes were all but being realized, as he thought, he coupled this feeling of satisfaction with the other feeling of joy at seeing his partner at home.

"Everything seems to be all right here," said Adam.

"Oh, yes, everything has moved along very smoothly."

"Have you raised the price of wheat any since I have been gone?"

"No. It's just the same."

"That's right."

"How did you find everything in New York?"

"First rate. Good many changes since I was there last. It was the year before I came West—twenty-one years ago."

"How is the flour trade there?"

"Well, they're sellin' lots of flour there, but as to just how trade was, I could tell as much about that here as I could there. Did Hi Peters bring them sacks back that we lent him just before I left?"

"No."

"Next time that you see anybody in here that's goin' out his way I think you'd better send him word. I see there's some screenings down there in the cellar that need to be sacked up. I guess I'll go and take care of them."

Not a word about flour or new process milling. Moore was discouraged and angry and non-plussed. His expectancy was crushed. When he wished to talk about flour and what Adam had seen in New York, Adam wanted to know about a dozen sacks that had been loaned some three or four weeks before, and instead of giving an account of his trip he must take up a half day's job of sacking screenings. From the way Adam had started in, George had little doubt that he would take a two or three days' tinker with the dam.

Moore put on his hat and coat and started down street. He glanced down in the cellar, as he passed by the outside door, and saw Adam with scoop shovel in hand sacking the screenings, Bob holding the sack and jolting them down. Moore went to his father's bank and told his father that he would like to see him privately for a few minutes. He related his experience with Adam.

"Well, George," said his father, "it was all right sending Adam down East; that is, it didn't do any harm; but I never had much faith in its bringing him around. He's too old a man, and is too hard headed to change his mind suddenly. Now you may bring him around, but I doubt it."

"Why, father, you never said anything of that kind before. Why didn't you say that before Adam went away?"

"Well, there were two reasons. In the first place you proposed his going, and were anxious to try the experiment, and then Adam

wanted to go. He kept saying that he didn't care to, but still the old man was very anxious."

"What shall I do?" said George.

"Well, I'll tell you what to do. You let the old man sack his screenings, and let him do what other puttering he's got to do. Let him have a few days to himself. Don't say a word to him about his trip, and he'll not say anything to you, you may be sure. After he has noticed that you are silent on the subject, having expected you to say something to him, why then you can come down hard. I have been making inquiries among some of my business friends in regard to this new process business, and I learn that every one who is making flour that way is making money, and that's all I care to know about it. I know you are not making money, and I think the sooner the change is made the better. If Adam don't want to make it, why we'll make it without him. It's got to be done. We'll have a clear understanding on that subject before many days."

"Why not do that now?"

"A few days will not make any difference. Just let the old man alone a while."

George was restive and nervous for the first day or two, but as the time passed he felt easier. He recovered from his disappointment, and began to feel a satisfaction in his ability to bring Adam into line. As George had expected, Adam found that there was something wrong with the dam. He told Moore that he saw a place there that he didn't like, and he believed he would take one of the men and go up there and fix it, and there he stayed for three or four days, stopping at the mill a few minutes morning, noon and night. After that it was something about the mill. He was rarely in the office. The elder Mr. Moore had told his son that he thought it was time he should talk to Adam about the new process. George trembled a little, hesitated, but withal was glad of his opportunity.

"Would you rather I would talk to him?" said his father.

"Oh, no. It's best I should do it."

"Don't allow him to excite you or make you angry, but tell him very plainly that it's a business matter, and that the change will have to be made, with him in the business, if he so desires, but without him, if necessary.

George went directly to the mill, and for the first time since Adam had been home, found him reading the paper in the office. As he took off his coat to seat himself Adam was preparing to lay down his paper and go out. George's silence on the new process question since his return from New York had disturbed him.

"Wait a moment, Mr. Strong, I'd like to have a little talk with you."

"All right; what is it?"

"What did you find out about the new process while you were gone?"

"Oh, I didn't find out much that I didn't know before.

"Did you see some of the flour?"

"Yes, I saw some of it."

"Well, how did it look?"

"It looked nice enough."

George hesitated.

"Did you think it was good flour?"

"Well, I can't say that I did. I don't think that it amounts to much."

"The question is, does it sell for more?" said George.

"Yes, I believe it does, but there isn't much of it. They don't make flour that sells for much more than the other."

"I guess, taking it all together, it sells for more than ours, don't it?"

"Well, maybe it does, but I don't think the flour amounts to much made that way. I believe we can make it better our way. Don't believe our burr dressin's done the way it ought to be. I'll have to look after that myself. I can make just as nice flour as any I see while I was gone without any new process."

"Mr. Strong, I do not feel competent to talk to you about this subject from a milling standpoint. I have looked into it in a business way, and take a business view of it, and I propose to act on business principles. The situation is this: We have been losing a little money every day for six months, and I have no doubt that our milling is as well done as anybody's who is milling this way, and who mills for the general market. Now I know of others who are milling on the new system and who are making money. There are those who are even coming into our local trade. I am in the milling business to make money, and I will say to you right now that this mill is going to be changed to the new process unless you've got enough money to buy me out."

Adam made an angry gesture and began to say something.

"There's no use in getting angry about this, Mr. Strong. This is a business matter, and it isn't going to do any good to say harsh things. I say it again, that this mill is going to be changed to a first-class new process mill unless you have enough money to buy me out."

"I suppose you and your old man has got this thing fixed. The old man crowded you in here, and now I guess he wants to crowd me out."

"He has no such disposition; quite the contrary. As to my being crowded in here, your statement is unjust, but as that is not the matter at issue we will not talk about it."

"You hold the money and I guess you can force me into it. I've got nothin' to buy you out with, and then I've got nothin' to put in to buy new machinery with. I suppose you'll want to slice into my interest in the mill about that much."

"No, I don't want to do either. There is no occasion for it. Our account is good for a certain cash payment, and then we could make settlements for the balance with our notes."

"Well, remember that I say I was forced into this thing, and if it don't pay it's not my fault."

"It is very clear that it is not your fault. Since we are settled in this matter, I'll tell you the next move that we must make. We must look around amongst some of the other mills that have the new process and see who we want to do the work."

"I guess you can do that without me."

"I don't want to, and don't intend to do it without you. To make everything pleasant and agreeable you should interest yourself as much as possible in it. When this mill is changed, and without you taking any interest in it or caring for it, or knowing anything about the new arrangement, it would certainly be very unpleasant for you. And then without this interest or knowledge you certainly could not run it, and your partnership would be a pension."

"I guess it would not be a pension very long, or will not, anyhow."

"There is no use in prolonging this tone of conversation. I have no desire to do anything in a business way that would make you feel uncomfortable or interfere with your present interest in this business, and with your co-operation in the work that we are to do, nothing of this kind will happen."

"Well, I suppose I have got to learn my trade over again — rather late to commence."

George had made a forced march. He congratulated himself upon the result thus far, but it could not have been otherwise. Adam Strong was in a position where his naturally gruff temper, when angered, could not do him any good. He was quick to recognize it when Moore took a firm stand and practically threatened him with a loss of his interest in the mill. Like all men who are accustomed to having their own way, who are more used to driving than being driven, Adam followed well when he had to. George had had about all of this kind of talk that he wanted. He was a little pale and quite a little nervous as he walked out of the office and on to the platform immediately outside the front door.

The next morning when George Moore came to the mill he was feeling very comfortable. He had a pleasant good morning for every one whom he passed on the street. His salutations were more than usually sunny and bright. They were the reflections of his inner

feelings. He was about to make a business change, and, as a young man, he could not but believe that any change which he wished to make would be an improvement. This is an especial weakness of young men, and those young in business. In their ignorance they are full of hope in regard to everything.

Dick was waiting for orders in regard to branding some barrels. Moore, in the exuberance of his spirits, said :

“ Well, Dick, we’re going to put in the new process.”

“ Well, Mr. Moore, I’m glad to hear that.”

“ Why are you glad, Dick ? ”

“ Well, I know something about this new process flour. I hear the people talking about it in the grocery stores at night. There is a good deal of it sold here—more of it all the time, and I was afraid that it affected your business.”

“ It has affected our business.”

“ That time when we shut down so long I went down to Green City and staid around the mill there for a week, and I think I found out something about it. The new process flour, you know, is made out of the middlings, and I tell you their middlings look mighty nice as they come on to the burrs from the purifiers; they look just as pretty and white—lots different from the middlings in this mill, Mr. Moore—and then they grind them, and that’s what makes the new process flour. The miller down there is a friend of mine, and he showed me all around, and I stayed with him all the time that I was there. I wish that I could learn the trade.”

“ Why can’t you ? ”

“ Well, there’s not much chance here, and then you want me to pack the flour; but I must manage it somehow. I don’t want to pack flour all my life.”

“ Well, we’re going to change to the new process, and then maybe there will be some chance for you to learn.”

“ My friend down to Green City wanted me down there, but I thought I wouldn’t do it. I thought I wouldn’t leave here.”

“ No. That’s right.”

About nine o’clock George was interrupted in reading his newspaper by the entrance of Lizzie Gardner and her aunt, Mrs. Webb.

“ Mr. Moore,” said Lizzie, “ I want to avail myself of your offer to loan me your boat, not for myself, but to take aunty across the river to see Mrs. Anthony.”

“ Why, certainly, but this time I must charge a certain hire. I must be allowed to row you across myself.”

“ There is no need of our troubling you that much. Auntie wanted to go across this morning, and as she spoke of it I was

reminded of your offer. I am used to rowing and don't wish to trouble you.

"It would trouble me very much to be denied the pleasure of rowing you across."

In the meantime he was getting ready to go.

"Don't you think that it would be well for me to row the boat, Mrs. Webb?"

"I always was afraid of the water, but then we mustn't trouble you."

By this time they were all leaving the office together, and Lizzie, who would not have asked this favor for herself, was somewhat disturbed. He helped them into the boat, rowed up stream a little, as the current was swift, and then came down towards the other shore. As it was arranged, Mrs. Webb went on her errand and Moore and Lizzie took a little ride in the boat. He rowed up stream and she rowed down, and he thought she did it very nicely.

CHAPTER VII.

At this time new process milling was something which was mentioned in a way entirely distinct from ordinary milling. To be sure it was different, but it was mentioned in a way that attached mystery to the process. A man would ask for new process flour with an air which would lead one to believe that he questioned whether or not this flour was to be made out of wheat. The customer would say: "I have been using the new process for some time, and it's the flour for me." It was this public expression and this public demand which brought new process milling into general use. No one desires to expend money on a mill or in mill building because he is introducing a novelty—because he is doing something different or unusual as estimated from the doings of other millers. The millers themselves were somewhat mystified by the name "New Process," and, as is usual in the introduction of new ideas, they were met with opposition. There is always a feeling of respect for and a hesitancy to discard that which has been with us during past years. The old style milling, the low grinding system, had its traditions and its associations, and the millers who had learned their trades under it were loth to give it up. There was an opposition to the throwing aside of that which had required so much time and labor to learn, and the new process milling was regarded by many practical millers as something which would separate them from that which had given them position in the past. They felt that there was a possibility of their having to learn their business over again; they knew how they stood before the introduction of the new process, but they did not know what would be in store for them under the new order of things. As an uncertainty they dreaded it.

Adam Strong was led on a trip to a number of new process mills by George Moore. In some of the places which they visited they were received with great attention and kindness, while at others they were regarded as interlopers, and treated with coldness. One mill owner said: "We have paid to get this new process, we have worked at the thing ourselves, we have spent money to get it, and if you want to know how to do the same thing, you'd better find out the same way we did." This was an invitation to leave. Adam did not show any more interest in new process milling than he had ever shown before. He went into a mill as an unwilling visitor and passed for the quiet man—the man who was all attention, saw a good deal and said nothing. Geo. Moore asked the questions and did the talking for the two. After they had gone some of the millers and mill owners would say: "Well, the old one, he was pretty shrewd. He didn't say much, but he kept his ear open. He's a good one."

It is always the case in visiting mills that one sees the best side of the milling. He hears the best stories which are to be told, but learns of none of the troubles which have been encountered to lead to certain results. He knows of none of the complaints in regard to the flour, nothing about the high percentages of low grades or the low percentages of high grades. The talk is all about low yields and satisfactory percentages, and the prices for flour which are given are the highest ones.

When they reached home George Moore did not feel altogether satisfied with his trip. He had seen better milling than they were doing; he had seen nice flour, and felt satisfied of the benefit to be derived from the new process, but he had not seen anyone who seemed to thoroughly understand the logic of the new process. They all talked about it in a vague, uncertain way as being something which was removed from the ordinary, and which was, in a measure, outside the limits of reason and general understanding. While away Moore had taken the names of some of the millwrights, of those who had to do with the building of the mills. He was desirous of knowing the reasons which would lead him to certain results. His education had been in that direction.

After having been at home for a day or so, and having talked to Webb about what he had seen, he decided to write to one of the millwrights, the one who had been recommended to him the most highly. Their work had always been done by a very careful and industrious mechanic of a neighboring town. He was very skillful, and the quality of his work was all that it should be, but the new order of things demanded something more than a machinist, something more than a man who could frame a hurst, put up a piece of shafting, or fill a wheel. It required some one who understood processes in their advanced state

It was after the beginning of the change to the new process that so much of the millwright work was done in the shops by machinery. At that time the iron hurst was invented, and the bolts were made and set up in the shops rather than laboriously framed and put together in mills. The work of the new process millwright was in the line of new process work in another sense than that of milling; it was new process millwright work. The machinery he could buy in a form to be set up in a mill, and though the display of mechanical skill was less marked than before, the skill in arrangement, the knowledge of milling proper, the knowledge of processes and the intricacies of milling operations was, of necessity, much greater than before.

The millwright to whom George Moore had written made his appearance. He was a smart, shrewd talker, an energetic man, full of the accounts of the successes of others for whom he had done work; could tell wonderful stories of the profits which had been realized in the mills which he had planned and of many of the remarkable performances of those mills. No question could be put to him but what he could give a bright and convincing answer.

"Why," he said, "when I went down there to the White Star Mills they could hardly sell their flour. The mill next to them had put in the new process and was humming along all the time. I went down there and told them what they ought to do and how to do it, and just what it would cost; and they told me to bring the men down there and put them in and go to work, and we did it. I put in a couple of bolts, and the purifiers, and a re-grinder, and made a change in the dress of the stones—and I tell you I've got the best dress for making middlings in the country—and they started up and ground out some flour, and I shipped it down to New York and some to Baltimore, and they haven't had an idle day since."

This was the way, during these times. The talk was more about the successes, the general business results, than it was about the methods of the milling. The results were the interesting features to the mill owners; they had not the patience, for the most part, to care for or appreciate the methods which led thereto. If they had taken the little time necessary to inform themselves in this regard, there would have been less of the experimenting and less of that which was inordinately expensive and harassing to those who were financially interested in the mills of those times. They said to themselves: "Here we are promised certain results; if we get those results that is all we want." And here they stopped thinking. It was hardly so with George Moore. He was young yet, and had more of the natural enthusiasm which belongs to young men than had many of the older millers of that time. He was interested in his business for its own sake. He showed a deep concern in the logic of the results, and in that way ex-

cited the attention and interest of the millwright, who was thoroughly capable in his way, was abreast of the times, and who felt an interest in and a respect for those who wished to inform themselves, in a milling sense, of what was really going on.

Webb was one of the few older millers who took a lively and absorbing interest in the developments of the times. He had long talks with this millwright and Mr. Moore, at which times Dick was always on hand, and listened with breathless interest. Mr. Moore was very glad to have Webb around for the reason that he could ask the millwright more intelligent questions than he could himself, and then Moore could take the advice of a practical man, one in his own employ, and whose judgment was not warped one way or another with reference to the changes which were to be made. Webb's presence gave Dick a license to be on hand, and he, much to the surprise of his senior, was able to give the points of difference between a new milling which the new millwright would suggest and that which was in use in the Green City Mill which Dick had visited. Webb had conceived a very high regard for Dick during the months which had passed, on account of the great interest which he had shown in milling matters and the development of considerable skill in understanding the method which was talked about and written about during those times. Dick had spent a great deal of time in the mill after his working hours learning to grind, and in following Webb about and looking into all that was being done in the mill. It had not been an unusual thing during the last month or so for Dick to go up to Webb's house on Sunday and talk about the mill and that which was to be done.

George Moore could not get much help from Adam Strong in the way of deciding just what was to be included in the contract for the mill; most of his consultations were with Webb. In a short time a contract was concluded. It was thought best to put four new reels in the new mill, and to put double conveyors under the four old ones which they already had. Then it was agreed that they would take out the old rolling screen, which was said to take up too much room, and to put in a separator and a smutter. They had a smutter, but it was thought best to put in a new one. Then they were to have a re-grinding stone and a bran stone. Most important of all were the purifiers, four in number. This was a big change, a large addition of machinery, but it was decided that it was the best thing to do.

CHAPTER VIII.

The contract was closed on Saturday. The next day those immediately interested were inclined to search out one another and talk about it. Moore met Webb and Dick walking down street towards

the mill. Dick had commanded their respect through his interest and intelligence as displayed in the consideration of what was about to be done, consequently he was not regarded as an interloper. After dinner Dick took a walk up the race bank towards the dam. Any one who did not know him, seeing his neat fitting clothes and his quiet, dignified carriage, would not imagine that he was a worker in the mill at low wages. There was none of that careless swinging or those uncertain movements which belong to people without the ordinary ambitions towards an advanced condition.

Dick had come from good stock. His father had occupied a position of trust in a neighboring city for many years, but ill health had prevented him from entering into general business competition and acquiring a competency. His idle moments had been spent in literary training, and more money than could well have been spared from his income was expended for books. After his death, which occurred about six years before this time, Dick and his step-mother found it necessary to exert themselves to the utmost to make even a fair living. His mother had contributed largely to their support during the first of these years by sewing. She was not a woman of the same quality or disposition as Mr. Herrick's first wife. She was industrious, generous in spirit, and in every way in which her disposition led her a kind and generous woman. But she did not appreciate Dick's tendency toward a studious life.

As Dick walked up the race bank, he saw a little party sitting well up the side of an embankment under the shade of a tree. He thought that he recognized Webb, and as he got closer he saw Lizzie Gardner and Mrs. Webb.

"Why, Richard, are you taking an afternoon stroll?" said Mrs. Webb.

"Yes, I was taking a little walk. Good afternoon, Miss Gardner."

"Come up here and sit down," said Webb.

"I thought you went to Sunday school, Miss Gardner," said Dick.

"I do, but I go in the morning. It seems to me that you ought to be better informed than that."

"Well, there are other things that I know more about than I do about Sunday school, but I guess I'm not too old to learn."

"You might try and see what you can do."

Lizzie turned the conversation by saying to Dick that she understood from her uncle that he was trying to make a miller of himself. She was a little afraid that he might ask her to show him the way to the Sunday school which she attended, and while she had no particular objection to his company she did not care to put herself in a position for him to ask to accompany her.

"Do you think that you will like milling?" said she.

"Well, you see, I have to like it. I've spent about all of my life in a mill, and I've no time to begin anything else and reach anything soon that will pay. You see I wanted to go to school, I wanted to learn more than I have, but I couldn't do it. We moved over here, mother and I, and as she took good care of me when I was small, as soon as I was large enough I felt that I ought to do for her. Yes, I'll like milling. There is a chance to think as well as a chance to work."

Webb and his wife walked over towards the dam. Milling was so much a part of his work during the week that he could not entirely separate himself from a part of its duties even on Sundays. There is always a suspicion of leaks in the dam in the minds of millers who are used to working in water mills. Lizzie and Dick said that they would stay under the tree and watch the basket while the older people were away.

"Uncle Ed says that you are very much interested in the new process milling, and that you really know a good deal about it."

"Mr. Webb is very kind to me, and has been ever since I first went into the mill."

"He's kind to everybody. He's been just as good to me as he could have been if I had been his own child. After father died I wanted to go to teaching but he and Auntie wouldn't let me say one word about it, and insisted that I must stay right here with them."

"Would you like to teach?"

"No, I don't believe that I would, but it seemed that it was right that I should take care of myself and not be a burden to anybody."

Dick said nothing. He was half lying down in the grass cutting out a piece of sod with his knife, and was too much wrapped in thought to answer her. He was wondering how many years it would be until he would master the art of milling and be in a position to—well, Dick was just formulating what he wanted to do when he reached the coveted position. It was too daring to give the thought decided form even in his mind, but he was sure he was going to make a good miller of himself and be able to make some money, and—

Lizzie sat still too. It is hard to carry on a conversation by one's self, and Lizzie was apt to be a little quiet at times.

When Webb and his wife came back from the inspection of the dam the hospitable aunt unpacked the lunch basket and took solid comfort in making them all eat a good deal more than they wanted. After the basket was again in order they walked towards home, Webb and his wife talking about household matters, and Lizzie and Dick following behind. Dick had been offering to loan Lizzie a book of his father's, about which they had been speaking, when Lizzie said:

"All of my mother's books were packed away with the rest of her things when I came out here, and I don't see any way of getting

them now. It would be less lonesome — no, I should not say that ; I mean that it would seem as if I were not so far away from her, if I had her books and little things here.”

“ I never heard you speak of your mother before.”

“ No, I don’t speak of her often. You see she and I were always together, and when she went, there didn’t seem to be much left in the world. I had never known my father well. He was kept away from home by his business most of the time, so mother and I were always together. She taught me, so that I did not have to go to school, and we were never apart.”

“ Dick did not know what to say. He felt sorry for Lizzie, and wanted to say something to show his feeling, but a boy of twenty does not have words of sympathy at his command. There was a silence of a few moments, when Lizzie said :

“ If it had not been for Uncle Ed and Auntie I do not know what I should have done when father died. I never knew my mother’s family, although they lived only a hundred miles or so from where we did, and if I had not come here I would have been alone in the world. I did not know them very well for I had only seen them once — one summer when mother and I were here for a few weeks.”

When they reached the gate Lizzie asked if he would not come in, an invitation which was heartily seconded by Webb, but he refused because he thought it better and went on. If he had known that George Moore went to the house a few moments after his departure and took Lizzie out boat-riding — her aunt refusing to go, as she had done very often of late — he might not have felt so comfortable.

That evening Webb and his wife sat talking after Lizzie had gone to her room. They had been talking of her for some time. They were both very fond of Lizzie, but Webb seemed to think more of his “ little girl ” than did his wife.

“ I don’t see how we ever got along before she came. When she is out of the house now it is so lonesome that I wonder how we could stand it if she were not here at all,” said he. “ I wonder if the child is happy here. I mean, I wonder if she has company enough. You know we are not just like what her mother was, and our ways aren’t what she has been used to. Lizzie’s mother had such dainty ways about her and kept her house so different from what other people did that the child may miss it. Then she doesn’t have much young company, only just what she sees there at church and when she helps them sing.”

“ Why, Mrs. Moore has been kind to Lizzie.”

“ Oh, yes, she’s been kind enough, but I guess she won’t put herself out of the way to make the child happy. If it happens to come in her way to ask Lizzie to her house to sing for her, or anything

of that kind, why she's going to do it, but she'll forget all about her any other time."

Mrs. Webb did not see things in just the same light that her husband did, but she said nothing. She was happy and contented herself and did not see why Lizzie should not be also. Webb went on after a moment's silence:

"The child is always cheerful and always seems to be happy. Maybe I'm wrong in thinking she needs anything." A moment's pause. "I wonder if she would like to go back to school this year? We can afford to send her if she wants to go."

"Well, I should think that a girl most eighteen had been to school long enough."

"But if she wants to go, why she ought to, and we ought to send her, though I don't see what we would do without her."

The next morning Webb gave Lizzie quite a large sum of money for a man in his position, and told her to get some of those "fixin's that girls like," and when she protested and did not want him to do so much for her, and asked if she did not look well enough in what she already had, he said: "Why, yes, little girl, you always look pretty, but take the money and get a new bonnet, or something else," and Lizzie took it.

CHAPTER X.

The elder Mr. Moore and his wife were sitting at home talking. The subject of conversation was a picnic which Mrs. Moore was planning to take place in the near future. The place and means of conveyance had been selected, and the people who were to be invited were under discussions. A list for a picnic is always subject to revision until the invitations are actually out. Mr. Moore had but few suggestions; this was his wife's line, and while he was not averse to any social festivity, he left the preparations to her, having had abundant evidence that she enjoyed the work. When the list was about finished Mr. Moore said:

"Why don't you invite that little girl who used to come here to sing when you were practicing for your Sunday school concert, Jennie no,—Lizzie Gardner, isn't she?"

"Oh, she hardly belongs with the rest we have down."

"Why? She is certainly just as pretty and well bred as any one I know?"

"Yes, she's pretty enough and her manners are all right, but —"

"But what?"

"Well, she's only the niece of one of the millers in George's mill."

"Well, Webb's all right. He's just as straightforward a man as I

ever knew. I must say that the girl made an impression on me, and that I would like to see her again."

"I guess she's made an impression on one of the other members of the family, if one can judge by what one sees."

"What do you mean?"

"George."

"Well, what has George been doing?"

"Oh, I've seen him out riding with her several times lately, and they were out boating last evening together. A young man of George's age is apt to make a thing of that kind too serious if some one doesn't take the matter in hand. It wouldn't do at all."

"Well, I can't see why it wouldn't do if it suits them. She's a lady all through, as far as I can see."

"O, yes, I haven't any fault to find with Lizzie, but it would hardly do for George to marry into the family of one of his millers."

"Well, I can't see that it would any harm. George's father was not in any higher position than that when the young man came into the world, and I can't see that any one is any worse off for that now."

Mrs. Moore dropped the subject. She knew that when she and her husband started on the subject of his early struggles and worldly position that they would not agree. He was rather proud of the fact that he had not only earned his position by his own foresight, but that the greater part of his education was the result of his effort in hours when his other work did not take his times. Mrs. Moore thought very highly of social position, and any suggestion that it had not always been her husband's before she knew him was to be put out of sight and not considered.

"I wish Lucy Elliot could be home for our picnic," said she.

"Why, is she coming home? It has been a long time since I saw her?"

"Yes, she will be here soon. You see she has been away at school for two years, and last summer I saw her when I was East. She's a beautiful girl, as straight as an arrow, with hair and eyes as black as coal, with a complexion worthy of a queen. She's been to one of the seaside resorts this summer since she left school, and will be home very soon. Her mother told me to-day of her coming. She's the kind of a girl for George."

Mr. Moore laughed. He was used to his wife's plans for George's future, and he only said: "I guess George will find out for himself which girl he likes best. It's a good thing to leave matters of that kind to adjust themselves."

And George did find out sooner than his mother was ready that he should.

M—— was a small town, but not so small but that it had its

aristocracy. This aristocracy was young; the town had only recently emerged from that period of its existence in which there are no acknowledged class distinctions. Mrs. Moore was the leader of the aristocracy and did much to draw the lines close. There was a constant tendency to the former democratic simplicity, and without some one to uphold it there was danger that there would be a relapse. The former Mrs. Moore had been too busy with the cares of her household during the time when her husband was making his money to give any time to society, had she been so inclined, and after there was no need for her to give so close a supervision to her house she still did it from force of habit. After Mr. Moore's second marriage his house became the center of all the festivity of the town. Mrs. Moore had been a society woman before her marriage, and on coming to M—— she took the lead very naturally. Mr. Moore rather enjoyed the new order of things, and felt proud of his wife's ability and the manner in which she entertained their friends.

The evening after the conversation between Mr. Moore and his wife, Mrs. Moore took occasion to consult George as to the names of those whom she had invited. She did not care much for his opinion, and had not thought of changing her list, but she was desirous of finding an opportunity for suggesting to him that his attentions to Lizzie were rather marked. After she had read the list she asked his opinion of it.

"Are you not going to invite Mr. and Mrs. Willard, madam?"

"Why, yes; their names are there; did you not hear them?"

George said that he had not, and added: "I did not notice Miss Gardner's name either."

Here was Mrs. Moore's opportunity, but she found it hard to use it. She was somewhat afraid of George. He had a quietness about him which inspired people with respect for him.

"No, I had not thought of asking her. She hardly belongs—she is not—well, her position is hardly such as would warrant it."

"Miss Gardner's advantages and accomplishments are superior to those of any one here, and she is the equal of any one whom I have ever met anywhere."

"Yes, George, all that may be true, but the position of her relatives here is not such as would make it proper that she should be made one of us."

"It hardly seems to me proper that any one who is the equal, to say the least, of any one here, should be condemned to associate with those not congenial to her, simply because the death of her parents places her with them."

"Was not her father a brother of Mrs. Webb?"

"I believe so."

“ Well, there must be some similarity then in the minds of her and her aunt. I cannot see that there is any thing unjust in leaving people to the station to which they were born.”

“ George said nothing. He was angry and went out of the house and walked over to Webb’s, to take some new books which he had received that day. Books had furnished the occasion of many a visit there, and were likely to be a good excuse for some time yet.

In course of time the day of the picnic arrived. George had said nothing more about an invitation for Lizzie, although he had thought about it several times. Mrs. Moore had not sent the invitation, having no intention of carrying out what an invitation would imply. The attention which she had shown Lizzie at the time of the Sunday school entertainment was no more than any one engaged in that entertainment received. It meant nothing as to the future social enjoyments of the village. It is fair to say that Mrs. Moore was much pleased with Lizzie, and if she had not seen George with her frequently might have taken her under her care. She liked young girls, especially if they were pretty and engaging, and enjoyed having one to ride with her and entertain her at odd hours. She had not done a wise thing when she refused to send the picnic invitation to Lizzie, but she did not know the effect the omission would have on George.

George did not refuse to go to the picnic; in fact, he went and enjoyed himself. He had no thought of making an issue with his step-mother on so small a matter. Although there had never been any very cordial feeling between them, there had never been any trouble, and there was not much probability of there ever being. George had too high a respect for himself and his father to allow any thing to come between him and his father’s wife, and Mrs. Moore was too wise to antagonize her husband’s son and heir to any great extent. Again, she looked to George to help her hold up the family standard, and any show of democratic feelings such as his father expressed distressed her beyond measure.

A couple of evenings after the picnic George rode over to Webb’s house to ask Lizzie to go riding with him. It was now some three months since he had taken her across the river with her aunt, and in that time he had taken her boat and buggy riding very often. It was a great pleasure to have the change from the quiet life of her aunt’s home which was afforded her by these evening drives. Her aunt and uncle were very glad of anything which gave her any pleasure, and, in their simplicity and lack of worldly knowledge, gave the matter no thought other than the fact that it made the girl happy.

Lizzie accepted the invitation and the two drove out into the country. It was early and the light was good. George thought that

he had never seen her look so pretty. She had on a white dress which had some ends of ribbon to give it color, and over this she had thrown a white shawl, which had been her mother's. A broad white hat completed a costume which is always becoming to youth and beauty.

"The warm days will soon be over; it is nearly fall," said George.

"Yes, but the winter is always pleasant. There is something pleasant about all the seasons. I am anxious to see M—— in the winter; it has been so beautiful here this summer that it cannot but be pleasant later." And so they talked about the weather and the books and themselves a little, and said nothing which meant anything, after the fashion of young folks who are having a pleasant time. It is later in life that people talk about serious things, although young people have a great many serious questions to settle and do a good deal of thinking. It is a rare thing for young people to talk about what they are really thinking; they are shy of their own thoughts.

George drove slowly. As the daylight faded and the moon made things pleasantly bright, he sat watching Lizzie as she chattered on, hardly thinking what she was saying. He was thinking that she was very lovely, and that it would not be a bad thing to have someone like her always by him; in fact that she would make life altogether more to be desired. He had never thought of marrying Lizzie before; she had simply been a pleasant companion, and if it had not been for Mrs. Moore's interposition it might have been a good while before the thought would have come to him; but the idea that Lizzie was not considered a desirable addition to M—— society made him think all the more of her engaging ways, and a young man thinks fast and moves in dispatch in matters pertaining to love. Clearly he could do no better than to ask her to be his wife, and as such her position would be secured and Mrs. Moore would gracefully accept the situation. Besides this, the success of the mill made it not only possible but desirable that he should have a home of his own, and he felt the elation which business success brings.

Lizzie was talking on and playing with one of the roses which she had worn in her belt when George put out his hand and said: "Won't you give me that rose, Lizzie?"

Lizzie looked up at him with her brown eyes all filled with surprise. He had never called her Lizzie before, and no one had ever used that tone of voice to her. Not knowing what else to do, or what to say, she held out the rose to him, which he took and held, as well as the hand that gave it. Lizzie drew her hand away and looked down and felt frightened. George was a little frightened himself. This was his first love making, and no matter what a man's age is, there is always a little timidity about the first attempt at telling a woman that he loves her.

George put the rose in the button hole of his coat and then put his hand toward her.

“Won’t you give me the hand, too, Lizzie?”

Lizzie was very much disturbed, and did not know what to say. She was not quite sure as to what he meant, so she said nothing, and kept up a close scrutiny of the roses at her belt. George waited a moment. That moment made him all the surer that he must and would have this reticent little girl for his own.

“Don’t you see what I mean, Lizzie? Don’t you see that I love you?”

“Oh, Mr. Moore.”

A pause.

“Why don’t you answer me, Lizzie? I want you to tell me that you love me, and that you will be my wife.”

Lizzie tried to speak and could not for a moment. When she did it was so low that George could hardly hear her.

“I can’t say that, Mr. Moore.”

“Why, Lizzie?”

“Because it would not be true.”

“But, Lizzie, you do not love anyone else, do you?”

“Oh, no.”

“Then you are sure that you don’t love me just a little?”

“Oh, yes.”

George waited a minute. He was not a young man to give up any thing easily, and every minute made Lizzie that much more desirable. Then he slowly said:

“If you don’t love anyone else, I can make you love me, and I am going to do it, Lizzie.”

Lizzie’s head sank lower, and her hands worked nervously. It was an ordeal for a girl as shy and unused to the world as she was. George faintly realized her distress and said:

“Have I troubled you, Lizzie? I wouldn’t do that for the world. But don’t you think that I can make you think of me as I do you?”

“I am afraid not, Mr. Moore.”

George did not press the matter farther, but, while he ceased to speak of it, he had not by any means ceased to think of it. They rode on for a short time in silence, when George said in his usual tone of voice:

“Did your uncle tell you how nicely the mill is doing?”

“Yes.”

George talked of indifferent subjects until they reached Lizzie’s home, leaving her to be silent. As he helped her out of the buggy he said:

“If you will be at home next Wednesday evening, I want to

bring over some engravings I bought when abroad. I think you will enjoy them."

Lizzie could do no less than say for him to come, although she would much rather he had not made the suggestion.

Lizzie slept very little that night. George had been the one relief which she had had from the society which surrounded her aunt. His modes of thought were more like those to which she had been accustomed during the lifetime of her mother, and the thought that she must lose that companionship was not pleasant. Still she did not see how it could continue. There was a little irritation in her thought of him. Why should he spoil so pleasant a friendship by being so foolish as to fall in love with her?

The next day she was pale and had a headache. Her uncle was much disturbed, and feared that she was going to be ill, and tried to think of what they could do for her to give her a change which might keep her from the threatened illness. Lizzie tried to reassure him but did not altogether succeed.

CHAPTER XI.

The change in the mill had been made. The mill had started — had started a day or two before they were ready, which is frequently the case with new mills, but in the end they had to "shut down" and complete arrangements before they got things to moving smoothly. This was a time of some little anxiety to Moore and Webb, and it was the occasion of lively interest and enthusiasm on the part of Dick. Adam Strong went about in his usual way, and while there was a taint of apathy in his disposition, he showed more interest in what was going on than might have been expected; yet it was more on account of the habit of supervising work, of seeing it done and criticising the workmen, than from a desire to forward the changes in the process. His interest, what there was of it, was one of detail rather than one of a general character. In a few days the mill came around to show what it would do. There had to be some changes in the flour and a few changes of spouts. There were several monstrous chokes which Adam said would never have occurred in an old process mill, and there was more or less trouble to get the middlings to travel properly on the sieves of the machines. They sometimes showed as great a tendency to run backwards as forward. But the middlings came around to the burrs and were ground. They were nice looking middlings. A farmer said that they looked just like corn meal, and the flour which came from them was pretty and bright.

Acting under the advice of his commission merchant, George did not put his brand on the flour first made, though he was rather anxious to see the words "new process" on the barrels which left the mill.

He had had some nice brands cut, but after a time—a week, maybe—he sent some samples of flour to New York with instructions to sell to arrive at a certain figure, a figure which George did not expect to get, as it was only a little below the best winter wheat patent. The flour had only been in New York a few hours when he received a message offering ten cents less than his price for a car lot. He was very much elated and accepted. He showed the telegram to Adam.

“Well, Mr. Strong, what do you say to that, now?” he said, in good natured exultation. “You see that’s pretty near a dollar a barrel more than the old flour.”

“Yes, that’s from your middlings flour, but what are you going to do with the other?”

“Why, its better now than the old flour was.”

“Its better than the old flour, if you can sell it for more.”

“We are doing that, sir.”

“O, well, it won’t go that way long, I’m afraid.”

There were the incidents and accidents which have to do with the starting of all new mills, an annoying, tiresome process. It was three or four weeks after the start until the last millwright left the mill. The flour moved off very nicely. The mill apparently was doing well.

Again George Moore went to Adam Strong with good reports of the work.

“How much wheat are you taking to run the mill?”

“You’re in the mill and I should think you’d know. I guess we’ll take a yield.”

“I think we’re taking more than we ought—more than we ever did before.”

In a few days they were able to take the yield. It included the last two weeks out of the four weeks run on the new mill, and while it was somewhat higher than George had expected, it showed a very nice profit to the mill. But withal Adam was not persuaded.

“If the mill moves along this way for some time,” George said to his father, “it will please me very well to have the old gentleman dislike it. He seems to have his head set against the new process, whether it makes money or not. If it proves to be as good a time as it looks I’ll buy him out. He’s no good to us in his present state of mind.”

“Yes, we’ll be able to buy him out, I guess, if the mill continues to do as well as it has done.”

It had now reached that time of year when if there was any market at all for flour it moved with a boom; it was about the first of September. It was at this time that the New England buyers used to buy their winter’s stock, that those in New York were anxious for

good flour ; and our mill was making good flour. Everything was as satisfactory as well could be. The first note which had been given to the machinery company for their supplies had been met, and without in the least embarrassing the working capital in the mill. It indicated that there was a nice profit in the business.

Dick was still at his old work, packing flour, though he was very restive in thus being set aside from the practical operations of the mill. His natural enthusiasm led him to enter with a whole-souled spirit into whatever attracted his attention. His first real interest in the mill dated from the time when the Green City mill came into their territory and sold new process flour. His thoughts at that time were of apprehension, and, at the same time, he was curious as to the general process which would enable them to make flour superior to Adam's, who, despite his lack of commercial success, was regarded as a great miller by the general population of the town. It will be remembered that Dick's interest in this affair had led him to take a trip to Green City to investigate in his own way the operation of the mill. His interest and his evident honest purpose secured for him the friendship and patronage of both George Moore and Mr. Webb, and at the same time he received several bluffs from Adam. We know how it was that he followed all of the details when the mill was being built and started. To go back to his flour packing was rather depressing. He did not like it, but he worked along through force of will, taking every minute that he could to look about the mill, to feel the grinding, to watch the purifiers and bolts, so that it was only a short time until he thoroughly understood the details of the operations of the mill and the relation of one part to another. When the mill was shut down for any purpose, from the breaking of any of the machinery, or on account of a choke, he was always eager to help get it started again.

While they were changing the dress on the burrs, as they did when they made the change to new process, Dick helped to furrow out, and really was able to do a very creditable piece of work for one who was so new at the business.

It was at this time that Dick's step-mother died. She had always been a sufferer from inflammatory rheumatism, and during recent years had had more or less trouble with her heart. One morning she complained of feeling unusually uncomfortable, and asked Dick if he couldn't stay away from the mill for a little while, and as the discipline was not very strict about the mill, and he felt that he could readily do this.

"If you say so, mother, I will send word over to the mill that I will not be there to-day."

"Oh, no ; you needn't do that. I'll be feeling better pretty soon. Just you go and get a bucket of water and put it on the table, and

then wait around here a few minutes and I guess everything will be all right. But somehow I don't feel just right this morning."

Dick took the bucket and went out to get the water. As he came in he heard a groan, and hurried into the front room to find his mother lying partially across the bed, evidently having fainted. He called in the neighbors, and started for the doctor. But it was no use. She was dead.

She had been a good mother to him. She was all that Dick had, as he felt. She was the only one who took a real hearty interest in what he was doing. To her he had given every thought; everything that had happened during the day had been repeated to her at noon or in the evening. To have all of this happiness and sympathy, to have this object of his affections so suddenly taken away from him, was indeed a sad blow.

Every one was very kind and sympathetic to him in his trouble, and his bearing at this time was such as to command the respect of all. Mrs. Herrick had a great many friends in town, and her funeral was a large one.

Dick found it hard going back to work again, but once there and busy, it was easier. A few days after this, when he was down street, he was met by the elder Mr. Moore who had some kind words to say to him, and during their conversation he asked Dick if Mrs. Herrick did not have a little property.

"Yes," he said, "she had the home there, and the garden patch by the railroad."

"Well, you ought to have an administrator appointed, Richard, and pay off her little bills if she has any, and collect whatever may be owing her; and if there are no other heirs, as I understand there are none, why you can have the property made over to you.

"I don't like to be in a hurry about such things."

"I understand that—I understand just how you feel, but it ought to be fixed up at once. Have you any one in mind that you would like to have administer on the property?"

Mr. Moore had charge of a great many large and small estates.

"I think Mr. Webb would suit me better than any one else."

"Mr. Webb is a very nice man, but I do not think that he has had much business experience. He is a most excellent man."

"I guess he has had enough experience for that little business," said Dick, who felt the pressure.

Following the suggestion of Mr. Moore, an administrator was appointed in the person of Mr. Webb.

Adam Strong felt as much out of place three months from the time that the change had been made as he did the first day that the

mill started on the new plan. He went through the mill at the usual hours, but not in the old way. He appeared to have nothing in view, excepting to cover so much territory. He went up to the dam more often than usual, and stood there and looked into the water; he would raise or lower a gate as a matter of form, and come back to the mill. Then he would go up stairs dragging one foot after the other, which was in remarkable contrast to his former vigorous demeanor. Webb virtually had charge of the mill, though his position in this respect was not formally recognized. As a matter of fact he was regarded as the head of the milling operations. Adam never questioned his position. One day when Adam was in his office, after they had been making some very comfortable sales of flour, George said to him:

"Well, Mr. Strong, the mill is certainly doing very well."

"Yes, mills generally do pretty well this time of year. You'll find it as dull as ever in the winter."

This was the way Adam felt. Nothing could change his mind, not even the realization of the profits of the mill. He had sacrificed a principle; he had been opposed to changes in the mill, and they had been made over his head.

The winter came on, and while the business was not as brisk, and the profits not so large, the mill continued to run and run at a profit. It was during these times when the flour did not go so easily that Dick made what he considered a great triumph. He had solicited the privilege of taking some samples of flour to some grocymen friends in Green City, and they had made some small purchases, and in a little while, stimulated somewhat by a little misunderstanding with their own miller, and by the calls from the users of this flour, began to order quite liberally. Once when Dick came back from an evening visit to Green City, for his trips were made at this time, he was able to report a sale of about twenty barrels of flour. Thus he felt the mill had been vindicated; that while the Green City mills had sold flour in the territory which belonged to our mill, the turning of the tables was a great feat. To him it meant a good deal. The sale of the flour was appreciated by George Moore.

"How would you like to quit packing flour and go around to some of these other towns and see what you can do?" asked George.

"I don't believe that I would like it. When I make a change why I'd like to go in and run the mill."

"Well, I guess you could learn to do that, Dick."

"Yes, I think I can."

"Well, we'll see what can be done."

It was a few weeks after this conversation that Dick was sitting one evening in the office of the mill. He had been looking around, examining the grinding, and had oiled the mill for Webb. He was

looking over a New York produce exchange report when George Moore came in.

"Well, Dick, you down here."

"Oh, yes, I always come down after supper. I come down to look over the mill, and help Mr. Webb a little. He shows me everything and is very kind."

"Well, I guess you are getting along pretty well, Dick."

"I hope so," said he. "Did you know, Mr. Moore, that the railroad company are going to build their shops here?"

"I understood so; in fact there has been some talk of a donation of property, and they will probably get a strip of land down near the south end."

"Yes, there's where they're thinking of going, because there was a man came to me to-night on my way down here and asked me what I'd take for that old garden patch of ours. I told him I didn't know what it was worth."

"I'll tell you, Dick, it's worth all you can get. If they want that piece of ground you can get a good price for it. How much is there of it?"

"Why, there's pretty near two acres."

"Well, there's right where they've got to have the ground, even if they get the ground that's donated to them."

"What shall I ask them for it?"

"It don't make much difference what you ask so that you ask them enough. Ask them seven thousand dollars to start on, but don't take a cent less than forty-five hundred dollars."

"Why mother couldn't get five hundred dollars for it."

"I know; but there were no railroad shops here then. The shops are going to be a great thing for this town. Then we're going to have the great reaper works. Hold your property at a good price."

The idea of forty-five hundred dollars for the old garden patch excited Dick quite a little. He felt anxious to sell, thought a good deal of getting that much money together, and really began to count on it. He kept himself posted in regard to the donation scheme, and one day, just before it was consummated, a gentleman came up to him on his way to dinner and asked him about the piece of ground again. He said:

"If you don't ask too much for that piece of ground, why we'll take that piece down there near you. We kind of want yours to make it out." Dick was very nervous. He trembled a good deal, and the negotiator felt that he had an easy task on his hands.

"Oh, I'll not stand in your way," said Dick; "I'll not be unreasonable."

"Will you take a thousand dollars for it?" was asked.

"Well, I don't know. That's more than was ever offered for it before, and I guess it's more than it is worth for anything else."

The local paper which came out the next week contained an account of the completion of the negotiations for the erection of the shops. They had a rough kind of a map which showed how it was all to be, and Dick noticed that the entrance of the road was through his garden patch. The paper said that this piece of ground had been purchased.

The reaper works had their ground between the railroad shops and the main line. After looking it all over on the paper, Dick took the next occasion to walk down the railroad and take another look at the old garden patch. The reaper company had commenced with a rush; they had the ground all plowed up for the foundations to their buildings. Immediately on the other side of Dick's property was quite a rise of ground — quite a little knob.

"Maybe I'm mistaken," said Dick to himself; "but I think they've got to have this piece of ground in order to get through to the place for the shops."

It was another month before Dick heard anything from the railroad company. The walls of the reaper works shops were pretty well up and the foundation of the railroad shops were above ground. There were stakes set through Dick's property to the railroad yards about the shops. About this time there was a call at his boarding-house from the railroad company's solicitor, the same one who had met him before.

"Well, young man," said he patronizingly, "I have come down to close up that matter about that piece of property. I see that everything's all right, that's it's in your name, and I've had a deed made out for you to sign here, and it'll be acknowledged, and then here's the company's check for the money."

"Well, we haven't agreed on the price, have we?"

"Oh, yes, we have. You said you would take a thousand dollars for it, and I said we'd take it. That's all right."

"Oh, no, I didn't say that. I said that a thousand dollars was more than had ever been offered for it before."

"Oh, young man, but you mustn't go back on your bargain. I reported to the company that you'd take a thousand dollars for it, and they wanted me to have it made out in writing, but I told them that you were an honest young man and it'd be all right."

"I expect that you told them that I was a little green, at the same time, didn't you?"

"No, I told them that you were all right, and that you'd do just what you agreed to do."

"You're all right about that. I did not agree to take a thousand dollars for the property, and I will not do it."

"Oh, well, it doesn't make any difference. We don't need the property. We can go in just this side of you, and if we want to we can condemn your property."

"All right," said Dick.

"But look here, young man, what will you take for that piece of ground? Be square about it!"

"I'll have to talk to some of my friends about it and see. I don't know what to say about so important a matter."

There was a good deal of parleying, but Dick was not moved. He went to Mr. Webb, who had been the administrator of the property, and they looked the situation over together, Mr. Webb thinking with Dick that the company had to have the ground.

"But I'll tell you, Richard," said Webb (who said Richard when he was in a serious mood), "that business about condemning the property is what bothers me. I'll tell you what we'd better do, we'd better go and see John Eliot. You know he helped us lots about the administration business."

And so they did. The whole thing was explained to him, and he told them that they couldn't condemn the ground excepting for a certain distance on each side of the track, and then only for the main line.

"If there's no other way of getting into the shop grounds, excepting by going through your property, you can make a nice little sum of money out of it, quite a little fortune for a young man."

They all got into the Judge's buggy and went down to see the grounds.

"I had some experience in railroading when I was a young man. I helped to run the line for the first railroad that was built in this section of the state."

After they had looked it all over, the Judge said: "If any one comes to you, Richard, you send him to me. You tell him that I represent you in this matter. Within a day or so I can tell to a cent just how much you can get out of them. The only way that they can get through, except by going on your ground, is by cutting through that nob, and the price of your ground will be fixed by just what it would cost to cut that nob. It won't cost much to have it measured up and I'll do it right away. There is a little ledge of rocks sticking out there, that'll have to be considered too. They'll have to cut through that."

The result of the whole thing was this, that the railroad company soon understood that the matter was entirely in Judge Eliot's hands. He estimated that it would cost thirteen thousand dollars to make the cut, and said he:

"You can make just three thousand dollars by buying this young man's property."

It was about a month before the deal was closed, but it was closed, and Dick Herrick sold the garden patch for ten thousand dollars.

CHAPTER XIII.

Early in the autumn Lucy Eliot came home. She was the daughter of Judge Eliot—not the only daughter, for there were three children younger than she, but the difference in age between her and the younger ones was so great that as far as companionship went she was alone.

As Mrs. Moore had said, she was a beautiful girl and an intelligent one as well. She was forceful, one who had a reason for what she did, and always carried through a plan which she might form. She had been away from M—— for several years at school, had only been home at rare intervals, and had lost much of her interest in the people and surroundings there. In fact, she felt her self almost a stranger. Some two or three weeks after her arrival, she was driving along the main street in the village with Mrs. Moore. This lady had made a great favorite of Lucy since her return, and Lucy had seen no reason for not reciprocating Mrs. Moore's attentions. They were together a great deal. On the morning in question they were driving slowly along the street, when Lucy looked up and saw Lizzie Gardner walking toward them.

"Why," said she, "there's a girl who looks exactly like one who used to go to our school. I believe it's the same girl."

"Which one do you mean, Lucy?"

"That girl in the grey dress."

"Why that's—"

"Oh, please stop, Mrs. Moore. I want to get out!"

Lucy sprang out of the buggy, calling: "Lizzie, Lizzie, how did you ever get here?"

Lizzie looked up surprised as Lucy caught her and kissed her there on the street.

"Lucy Eliot, how did you come here?"

"Oh, this is where I live. But how could you be here and I never find it out?"

"I live here with my aunt. I've been here ever since I left school."

"You dear girl, to think that I never knew it. Why I might have sent mamma word. I am so glad to see you!"

The two girls looked at each other as if they had each found a treasure; and, indeed they felt that they had. Lizzie had found one who had always been kind to her at school, and one who would break the monotony of her life now, and Lucy felt that here was one from

what was to her, home — the school to which she had been accustomed so long.

"I can't stay now, for Mrs. Moore is waiting for me. But you will come to see me, won't you, and then we will have such a long talk? No; tell me where you live, and I will come to you right away."

Lizzie told her where she lived, and turned and spoke to Mrs. Moore. Then the two girls said good-bye, amid many promises from Lucy to see her that very day.

Mrs. Moore was in a state of speechless surprise. How could it be that Lucy should know so well the girl whom she had neglected and despised? Lucy did not see her surprise; she was too full of the pleasure of the meeting.

"Isn't it strange that she should be here? We all wondered where she was — she was such a favorite."

"Did she really go to your school, Lucy?"

"Why, yes, of course she did, and there wasn't a girl who didn't love her. When her father died she said that she was going out west to an aunt of her's, and I never thought of asking her where she was going. And she has been here all the time."

Mrs. Moore wanted to know several things, but wisely refrained from asking. Then she was puzzled as to what the outcome of all this would be. Here was the girl she was so anxious to keep away from George going to be thrown constantly into the company of the one she wanted to keep near him. How could she work it?

Lucy did not go to see Lizzie that day, nor the next one. Her mother needed her and she could not find the time. Lizzie was somewhat disturbed at her not coming. The third day, in the middle of the forenoon, Lucy appeared at the door of the Webb house, and was ushered into the plain, stiff front room of which Mrs. Webb was so proud.

The two girls began to talk both at once, and right in the midst of it Lucy said:

"I came to take you home with me. You are going to stay with me a whole week."

Lizzie protested. She couldn't leave her aunt.

"Yes you can. She has had you all these months, and now it's my turn. I want some one who is familiar to me. Now where is that insatiable aunt? I want to see her."

When the aunt came Lucy talked to her a few minutes, telling her how they had missed Lizzie when she left school, and how glad she was to find her in M——. Then she said:

"I've come to ask a favor of you, Mrs. Webb. Are you a good person to come to for that purpose?"

"I guess about the only way to find out is to try."

“Well, I want Lizzie to come with me and stay a week, but she says she can’t leave you.”

Lucy did not have much trouble in persuading Mrs. Webb, and Lizzie was really glad to go, so it was arranged that Lucy should come for her that afternoon.

Lizzie had an extremely pleasant visit with Lucy. Her home was one of luxury and refinement, and the family, especially Judge Eliot, were all very kind to Lizzie. With the Judge she soon became a prime favorite. He was a quiet man, little given to conversation, but the family found that he had more to say to Lizzie than they had ever known him to say to any of the young people who frequented the house.

Lizzie enjoyed the atmosphere of luxury, and she enjoyed being with Lucy and talking about things which mutually interested them.

While with Lucy she met George Moore several times. Since he had asked her to marry him she had met him frequently, and the feeling of embarrassment in his presence had gradually worn away. He had met her exactly as he had before, and by his kindness and consideration had won her regard as he could not have done in any other way. She had come to think from his manner that he had forgotten all about the affair.

Lucy and George had known each other when younger, and their acquaintance was speedily renewed to their mutual pleasure. Lucy was so bright and vivacious, so open and pleasant in all her ways, that it was a pleasure to any young man to be in her society. No one had any idea of George’s preference for Lizzie. He never troubled her by showing it, but was always watchful for her comfort.

After Lizzie went back home she was often with Lucy. The two girls found that they suited each other even better out of school than when there. Lucy soon introduced her friend into the pleasures of M— society, and Lizzie found her life much brighter than before. She soon became a favorite with all the young people of the village, but was especially liked by the older ones. There was a quiet beauty about the girl which was extremely attractive, and she never antagonized the younger people by any thought of rivalry.

With Lucy it was different. She was soon the acknowledged leader among the young people, but such a position brought with it many envious feelings on the part of the other young people who surrounded her.

After Lucy’s return George Moore was seen more in evening companies than he had been before. This was attributed to the charms of Lucy’s society, and as he was more with the two girls than with any others, it was very natural to think so. In fact, Lucy herself, was not averse to the thought, and Lizzie often wondered at the truth.

His manner indicated no change during the winter from what it had been at any time since he had known her.

Early in the spring Lucy Eliot made a discovery. She found that she was in love with George Moore, and she acknowledged that it was no reawakening of the girlish interest she had had in him previous to her leaving home for school, but was the love of her maturer womanhood. She thought long and earnestly on the subject, although she never tried to dissuade herself from the notion that this was a permanent love; she knew her own nature better than that; she knew that it was life or death to her, and that nothing could change her feelings for George. But what she did think about was as to his feeling for her, and the more thought she gave the subject the farther she was from a conclusion. George's attentions were pretty equally divided between the two girls, and Lucy did not know what to think. But Lizzie began to have some idea as to Lucy's feelings. The girl was too restless and too watchful not to betray herself in some degree to her friend.

One spring evening there was a gathering of young people at Judge Eliot's house, and George and Lizzie were among the number present. During the evening George and Lizzie were walking on the piazza which was just outside the parlor windows. They had been talking of indifferent subjects and of the fact that it was about a year since Lizzie first came to M—. They stopped by one of the windows where there was no one standing. George was facing the room, while Lizzie had her back nearly turned to those who were in the house. George was growing impatient of his waiting, and could think of no better time than the present to put an end to it. He had but little hope as to Lizzie's answer to this, his second suit, but resolved to risk it at this time. He could not see that he was gaining anything by waiting.

"Lizzie are you not ready to answer the question I asked you so long ago? I have been waiting a long time."

Lizzie was not so frightened as she had been before. She had more to give her courage, and she was not so surprised as then; still she said nothing.

"Lizzie, can't you tell me that you love me just a little now, that you will be my wife some day? I can wait a long time—any time you wish, even if it is years." His tone was very tender, his look very expectant. He had hardly the appearance of the self-contained, quiet young man whom his friends were accustomed to see.

Lizzie looked up at him for the first time. She was very quiet, very tender, very like her own self. The past months had been developing some of the womanhood in her. Previously she had been nothing but a young girl; now she was slowly becoming a woman.

She was where any sudden experience might develop that womanhood rapidly without which she would never know when she left her girlhood. She said :

“ No, Mr. Moore, it cannot be.”

“ But why, Lizzie ? You told me last fall that you didn’t love anyone else, and you can surely say the same now.”

“ Yes.”

“ Then why can I not wait still longer ? Can’t you give me a little hope ? ”

“ No, Mr. Moore, I don’t think time would make any difference. It is something that can never be.”

“ But Lizzie, may I not wait ? ”

“ I can’t think that it would do any good.”

The look of expectation had gone out of George Moore’s face. He offered Lizzie his arm, which she silently took and they walked up and down the piazza a few times without speaking and went into the house. Lizzie looked for Lucy, but could not find her for some minutes. Lucy had gone out of the parlors, out into the grass, beyond the lights, where she could be alone a few moments. She had seen George as he spoke to Lizzie, with the expectation in his face, and had watched while Lizzie answered him, and had seen the disappointment and pain there. Lizzie’s face she could not see.

She could not know what they were saying, but the look in George’s face could only mean one thing, and the surprise, the shock of the partial revelation was more than the girl could bear, so she went out. When she returned, her face showed nothing ; she had learned so soon that bitter lesson of self-control which an unreturned love will soonest teach. No one but Lizzie had missed her, and Lizzie said nothing.

After this Lucy watched with every sense sharpened, but learned nothing. George was less with the young people than he had been at any time since her return, but this could be accounted for by the demand made on his time by his business, and Lizzie gave the girl no clue by word or deed. Had Lizzie returned George’s love Lucy would have gone her way and hid her secret, but the uncertainty only made it harder to bear. She determined that win his love she would if it were possible, and watched and waited with this in view.

CHAPTER XIV.

A month or two previous to the events narrated in the foregoing chapter, Mr. Cooke, the New York commission merchant, was in the West, and took occasion to visit M—— at that time. He was there two days. On the afternoon of the second day he was standing in the

mill talking to Mr. Webb about the mill and the flour it was making, when Lizzie came in bringing her uncle a message from his wife. Webb introduced Mr. Cooke to Lizzie, who said a few pleasant words delivered her aunt's message and went out. As she left the mill Mr. Cooke said :

"It's strange how one person will resemble another who is no relation to him. There is your niece who looks strikingly like some one I know, but I can't think who. You said her name was Gardner. Is she your niece?"

"No. Her father was my wife's brother. His name was Gardner."

They changed the subject and talked flour for awhile, when Mr. Cooke referred to Lizzie again.

"It's strange how that face haunts me. Did her father live here?"

"No, his home was in Lockport, New York."

"Lockport! Gardner! Why, he wasn't John Gardner who traveled for R—— & Co., of New York City?"

"Yes. I guess he was the same man."

"Why, I knew him well. Many an hour have we traveled together. That accounts for it. But she doesn't look like her father, either."

"No, she resembles her mother very much."

"Her mother was Miss Southwick, of Brooklyn, wasn't she? Her father disliked her marriage and disowned her, didn't he?"

"Yes, I believe something of the kind did happen, but I never knew much about it. John never said much and I didn't ask him."

"Well, I don't know much about it, but I know the family — that is, I know her brother, and did know her father before he died. Strange old man, he. Yes, I see her uncle," referring to Lizzie now, "about every time I am home. I will have to tell him what a pretty niece he has out here."

Webb told his wife and Lizzie of the occurrence, and they talked it over a little and forgot it. That is, the older people did, but Lizzie loved her mother's memory too much to forget anything or anybody who had any connection with her. She knew very little about her mother's family and about the trouble which had occurred at the time of her marriage. She knew that she had belonged to a wealthy, proud family of Brooklyn, and that they had strongly disapproved of her marriage, chiefly on account of the lack of wealth and position of Mr. Gardner.

About six weeks after Mr. Cooke's visit there came the following letter to Lizzie :

BROOKLYN, N. Y., June 19th, 18—.

MY DEAR NIECE:

We have just learned of your whereabouts, and write to-day of—

fering you a home with us. While it was not altogether my fault that your mother was treated as she was by her family, it has been the fault of her brother and sister that we have not sought out her daughter and given her what should have been the mother's. I write now asking you to forget the past neglect and come to us and be one of us as my own children are. My wife joins me in this request, which I assure you is heartfelt. I hope to hear from you immediately.

Your affectionate uncle,

EDWARD SOUTHWICK.

The cause of this letter was that Mr. Cooke had met Mr. Southwick one day, and glad of an excuse to speak with one of his position, had told how pretty and engaging his niece was, not for a moment imagining that Mr. Southwick did not know where this niece was. But this gentleman questioned Mr. Cooke adroitly until he found out all he wanted to know of Lizzie's whereabouts, and the result was the letter given.

The next mail brought another letter to Lizzie. This one was from her aunt, her mother's only sister, who had never married, and was keeping house alone not far from her brother. Miss Southwick asked Lizzie to come and stay with her, pleading that she was alone in the world and needed some one to cheer her old age. She urged that no one had so good a right to Lizzie as her mother's only sister. Lizzie said nothing about these letters. She thought the matter over for two or three days and then wrote declining to go to Brooklyn, at least for the present, saying that Mr. and Mrs. Webb needed her; that they had been so kind to her in her trouble that she could not leave them; that they had no children of their own, and that her duty was with them. After these letters had been sent Lizzie felt almost sorry that she had not taken more time for consideration. She really wanted to go to New York for a time, and particularly wanted to see her mother's people.

In the course of a week or two Lizzie received another letter from her aunt, Miss Hannah Southwick. In this letter was a strong plea for at least a visit from the girl. Her aunt wrote: "If you cannot come to me permanently, at least come for a few weeks this summer. I am going with my brother's family to the beach, and I want you to go with me. I want to see my sister's daughter. I know that we have no claim on you—that was forfeited long ago by our neglect—but I ask as a favor that you come to me for a short time."

Lizzie thought the matter over for a few days, and then spoke to Mr. and Mrs. Webb about it. They advised her to go, and talked so much about it that she finally wrote her acceptance of the invitation. Mr. Webb said to his wife one day, as they were talking the matter over:

"I can't see how we are to get along without the little girl. She seems to be a part of ourselves, but I suppose it's better she should

go; she needs the change and can't afford to miss this chance of seeing the world. I wouldn't have her stay with us, but I can't see how we are to get along without her."

This was the feeling of all of Lizzie's friends, but the one who felt it as strongly as any was Dick Herrick. He had been in the habit of spending Sunday evening at Webb's house, as much as anything for the reason that Webb liked to talk to the young man about the mill and milling methods. These talks had meant much to Dick; they had given him a knowledge of his business which he could get in no other way; but more than this he had had an insight into gentler ways and more delicate methods of thought than had ever come to him before. Lizzie had been kind to him, as she was to everybody, and her gentle dainty ways had been a revelation to the young man.

"I don't see how we are to get along without you, Miss Gardner," said Dick when he heard of the projected visit.

"It's kind of you to think and say that, it makes me very happy to think that my friends will miss me while I am away."

"It will be long enough for us to be glad to see you when you get back."

In a couple of weeks Lizzie was ready to go East, and went in company with a friend of Mr. Southwick's who was traveling from Chicago to New York. Her relatives gave her a hearty welcome, especially her aunt, who was a staid maiden lady, somewhat lonesome in her large house and altogether ready to welcome her niece, even had she been less attractive than was Lizzie.

"You are just like your mother, child. It's not like having a stranger around. It makes me think that I am a girl again, and that Mary and I were happy together as we used to be."

When Miss Southwick came to look in Lizzie's wardrobe and make arrangements for their departure for the seaside, she found that Lizzie was in no wise dependent upon her for the money to make the needed additions. Mr. Webb had seen to that without saying anything even to his wife, and Lizzie had accepted the gift in the same spirit which it was rendered. It made her feel more independent than she could have done in any other way.

CHAPTER XV.

After Dick got his money, the next thing was what to do with it. It concerned him a little and his acquaintances a good deal more; many of them could tell him just exactly what to do with it. One man said that if he could handle it he could double it in a year, but as this person had never made a dollar of his own, his advice was not heeded. Judge Eliot, who had been Dick's counsel in the matter, asked him what he would do with it, what his ideas were.

"Well, I don't know," said Dick, "I suppose it ought to be put some place where it would be safe and earn a little something, but I don't know what to do with it."

"Well, that's a very good thing. People who always know exactly what to do with their money, who always have so many uses for it, soon get rid of it. It's generally harder to take care of money than it is to get it."

"If you know of some good thing to do with it, something that's all right and safe, I would like to hear your advice."

"There are a good many things you might do with it, and have it perfectly safe. You might loan it on mortgage, but then you might have to foreclose sometime, and wait a long time, and spend a good deal to get your money out of the property. Our county, you know, has just been issuing some bonds which bear seven per cent. interest, and I think of nothing better to do, nothing safer, than to buy these bonds. Then, if you want to turn them into money it can be very readily done."

In a day or two after this, Dick went to Judge Eliot and told him he believed that he would do as he advised in regard to the matter; that there were so many people after the money that he wanted to dispose of it. And it was done in this way.

"Well, I suppose you will quit packing flour now," said one of his acquaintances who was at work in a neighboring factory. "I suppose you'll take your money and have a good time now, won't you Dick?"

"Why no, I won't quit packing flour until I can find something better to do about the mill."

"Why, you don't say you are going to work in the mill after you've got that money, do you? Why don't you travel around and have a good time? Go to Chicago and around and see the world."

"I don't think my money would last very long if I did anything of that kind. I started out to learn to be a miller, and there's no reason why I shouldn't do it."

Dick only lost two or three days during the time he was getting his business matters straightened. He worked in the mill as usual, and continued so to do in the same steady way as before. Every one wondered that they had never noticed what a good fellow Dick was. They always said he was a steady kind of a chap, but didn't suppose he was so regular and had such good judgment and was altogether so worthy a young man. The possession of money in this way will have its effect upon anyone. There is no one who will be proof against it. It may make a man mean and close, or it may make him liberal, extravagant and wasteful. Then, again, there are those to whom it merely adds strength of purpose, and impresses them with the necessity for general good behaviour and industry. This was the case with Dick. It

emphasized his good qualities — he had none that were distinctly bad. He felt that with this change in his life there was an opportunity for doing more and doing better during his earlier years than he could have expected, and he did not look for this advancement or these changes in his life outside the regular channel. Without formulating the thought in his mind he saw that it was entirely possible to bring out the best that there is in one through the training and work of a mill.

Dick had always been a reader of the books that his father had left him, and without being an enthusiast about them was a steady reader. He read a little all the time, and in the course of a year went through a number of good books. He was not so formal or stiff as to have a course of reading, as many other good people have done, but he read what suited him out of the books his father had left him, and as they were of the better class his reading could not but be good.

His advance in a business way had made him a number of very good friends, particularly in the case of Judge Eliot, who was glad to talk to him, glad to have him come to see him in the evening, it being the habit of many of the men in this small town to go to their offices a little while each evening with no clearly defined purpose excepting to go. Thus he had a very good opportunity of studying books and people at the same time — a most excellent combination.

One day Adam and George were standing in the mill door, when one of Adam's friends passed along and posed himself for a little gossip.

"Well, Adam," he said, "I understand that the flour is made by some kind of a new way—some kind of a new machine, is it, Adam?"

"No, it's what they call the new process. It's about the same old machines, but they call it the new process."

"It was some of that flour that I got here about a month ago, wasn't it?"

"Yes, I guess it was."

"Well, I'll tell you, it's pretty nice flour, but do you know I don't believe it has that nice, sweet taste the old flour used to have. The way you make it now it's white enough, but I don't believe it tastes as good. What do you think about it?"

"Well, I guess most everybody knows what I think," said Adam; "I think the old way's good enough. I don't think there is any advantage in milling flour to death — chasing it all over the mill to get it into the packer."

"I guess you're right, Adam."

About this time George Moore turned around and went into the office. It was now about the middle of October. The mill was still running night and day. They had not the least trouble in selling all the

flour they could make at good paying prices. The change in the mill had been greatly to their advantage ; it had made money very rapidly. George Moore looked out of the door and saw Adam's friend take his departure. He went to the office door and called to Adam to come in.

" Mr. Strong," he said, "you still appear to be dissatisfied with the working of this mill. Your mind still clings to the idea that there is nothing so good as the old way. You take no interest in the business and are doing nothing for it. Now may be you would like to buy me out and run the mill your own way, or possibly you would like to sell out and buy a mill after your mind."

" I've been thinking something about that myself. I don't want to buy, and I couldn't buy if I did."

" Yes you could. You're in a better fix financially than you have been for a long time, Adam, and the property here is making money, and if you want to buy me out you'll have no trouble making the arrangements."

" I don't want to buy, but I'll sell."

" For how much."

Adam named his price. It was lower than George expected. He had estimated the value upon the earning capacity of the mill, in which Adam had little confidence, while Adam had estimated it according to what he believed it would cost to build and equip the mill.

" Mr. Strong, I will accept your offer, if we can arrange as to terms of payment."

" I want cash."

" I don't know whether I can give you cash or not, but I will let you know in the morning."

Adam got up and went to the dam. Morning came, and with it the completed arrangements to buy the property. George had arranged with his father to get the money. The old gentleman scratched his head a little at first, but finally said he guessed that he could raise it. Adam took the money and his family and moved back to Pennsylvania, to his old home, and there bought a mill which he soon arranged to suit himself. He even had an old dam that he could go and watch.

CHAPTER XVI.

As far as the running of the mill was concerned, Adam's absence meant very little. There had been a time when he interested himself in everything that had to do with the mill, but after its change to the new process, his interest, as we know, departed ; he cared nothing for it. Even the money that it made did not appear to be good money in his eyes. A great many people regretted Adam's going. He had a sturdy honest way that made him popular with every one, for that

quality. George Moore appreciated all the good that was in him, and it was really a sad thing to see the old man pack up and leave the mill that he had been with so long. How it affected him as a matter of sentiment no one could know.

The mill still continued to run profitably. The business, just before harvest, as is usually the case, was a little dull, but after that, until the middle of November, the mill could have sold a great deal more flour than it made. A period of somewhat smaller profits and fewer sales then followed.

One day one of the men about the mill remarked that "it was a year since Adam left."

"So it is," another answered; "doesn't seem that long, does it?"

When the mill runs all the time the year soon passes around. It is the long delays, the waiting for the markets to improve, that makes the long weeks and months. At this time we find that Dick had left the packers. For some months he had been interesting himself in selling flour and buying wheat around through the neighboring towns. George had come to the conclusion that it would be well to have a good local trade to fall back upon in the winter. Dick took to this sort of thing very kindly. He had a quiet, frank way with him that made friends. There were none of those brilliant qualities which attracted people to him in a promiscuous and hurried manner. He was the same every day in the year to every one, and his friendships were never disturbed. His contact with people, coupled with a more ordinary desire to read, had made him a very interesting person to talk with. There was none of the upstart in him. His conversation was simply quiet and reasonable. He had nothing to force upon people, but was always ready to make a quiet, logical reply to whatever might be said to him. People who bought flour from him became his friends and were not readily led away. His time was not all occupied outside of the mill in this way, and when in it he gave as much of it as possible in familiarizing himself with the practical duties of a miller; the principles he had in his head. He had been dressing stone at odd times for over a year and a half, and his practice was beginning to show good results. His good judgment and thoughtful habits made the other milling matters more ready of comprehension and practical developement in him than would have been possible for one working as a listless apprentice.

One day the elder Mr. Moore was seen coming towards the mill. "The old man's beginning to show his years, isn't he Webb?"

"Well I hadn't thought of it, but come to look at him I believe he is—Why, how do you do, Mr. Moore?" said Webb.

"Oh, I'm feeling tolerable well, just tolerable. Is my son about?"

"I think he's out in the warehouse. I'll go and find him for you."

Mr. Moore sat down on a barrel by the door waiting for his son. He looked tired; he did not have that bright, vivacious look, that genial, hearty manner which, till within a short time, had appeared to increase with his years. As he sat down he sighed as though he were tired, put his hand to his face and rubbed his eyes, and then took off his hat and let his arm lie listlessly at his side as he looked with a vacant stare out of the door. He had not been in the mill before for six months. There was a time when he visited it quite frequently, as he did so it had been his custom to look about him in an interested way, showing very clearly that he was very much interested in his son's prosperity. Now there was nothing of this in him. He did not see or hear the mill.

"Were you looking for me father?" said George.

"Why, yes; I want to speak to you, George. Let's go into the office."

George had noticed for some time that his father was not looking well, but as it was a tender point with the old gentleman, he had said nothing to him about it.

"Well, what is it, father?" said George, as he took a seat in the office.

The elder Mr. Moore got up and closed the door. "George, I want your note for ten thousand dollars, and I want you to execute a mortgage on this mill as collateral."

"Why, what's the matter? What's that for?"

"Well, I'll tell you what's the matter. I'm in a tight place, and I've got to raise some money."

"Is ten thousand dollars all you want?"

"No, but its all I can expect to get from you."

"Well, if you want more than ten thousand dollars, maybe my ten thousand won't do you any good. But what's the matter? How did you get into this awful tight place? Why didn't you say something about it before?"

"Well, I'll tell you what's the matter George. You know I took some stock in the reaper works down here, and I loaned them some money, and I've had to loan them quite a little lump. They were doing all right, but then, you know, the other day we were sued on our patents. The court granted an injunction against our making any more reapers, and I tell you our attorney don't give us much comfort. He talks about compromising, and the other fellows don't want to compromise unless we give them everything we've got, and our machines are out and nobody will buy from us, and nobody will pay us any money for fear they'll be sued on royalties and won't have any of our money to pay with. I tell you it's a bad case. Then I've advanced a good deal of money to these railroad contractors, and the

stock they put up is getting a little worse every day, and the contractors themselves are beginning to look a little shaky."

George was thunderstruck.

"I tell you, George, I don't like the way people are looking around the bank. We've paid more checks this afternoon than have passed over the counter for a long time."

"What would you do with my note if you had it?"

"Why, I'd send it to Chicago to-night and get it discounted, and get some money here as early as I could in the morning."

"Why, you're not that bad off, are you father?"

"Well, my son, I'm sorry to say that I am."

"Then, maybe, I'd better not let you have that note?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, I don't think ten thousand dollars is going to do you any good. I think it best for both of us that I should keep this mill out of the wreck if there's going to be one."

"George, I know what I'm doing. Do you mean to say that you refuse me the money after my helping you as I have?"

"I do not refuse to help you, father. I mean to help you, but if I throw this mill in the wreck I'm in no position to do anything for you. But tell me, do you think ten thousand dollars will save you?"

Mr. Moore stopped to think a while.

"No, I do not believe it will. I don't know why I asked for it."

"Do you mean to say that you have had a run on the bank to-day?"

"No, hardly that; but a good many people have quietly come in and taken out about all they had with us, and the aggregate has been a good deal more than I wish it was."

"Maybe if you open the bank as usual in the morning and put on a bold front the thing will quiet down."

"Well, that's what I'm going to do, anyhow. I'm going to open the bank and let them clean it out if they want to."

Unfortunately the bank trouble was talked about around the street that night, though in a very quiet way, and principally among the merchants, lawyers and the doctors. Most of them questioned as to whether the bank would open in the morning. George stayed with his father during the evening, and went through many of the details which led to his trouble. Mr. Moore was anxious to go down to the bank and look over the books, as he had done many times before in the evening, but George opposed the idea. He said in the present crisis that it might make trouble. His father was nervous and sick, and didn't know exactly what he did want to do. The bank opened at eight o'clock the next morning. There was no crowd around the door as Mr. Moore had partially anticipated there would be, but there

might have been noticed a number of people on the various street corners who were in conversation, and who occasionally cast their eyes towards the bank.

"Well, there's somebody at the door," was said by some one in each of these little knots of people."

"He's going to paste a notice on the glass," said one.

"No, he isn't. There's the sign, 'Bank Open.'"

As this happened, the people in the vicinity began to disperse. It would have appeared to the looker on that this was a hopeful sign, but the results showed what each had on his mind. Those who had money in the bank quietly went to their desks and wrote out a check and during the next hour or two several of them walked into the bank and drew out their balances, and then returned to their various places of business. Some of them said it was all nonsense, and the old man would come out all right, and they made bold to scrape all the money together which they could and make an early deposit. But there was too much talk. The condition of things was soon whispered around among the smaller depositors. They began to gather around the bank and draw out their money and stand out in the front and talk about it. The crowd grew in numbers until the sidewalk was blocked, and soon there was an immense crowd of men, women and children. The town marshal stood at the door to keep the people from crowding into the bank, and allowed only a few to enter at a time. These were paid.

There were all kinds of rumors and all kinds of talk among those on the outside. It was said that the next train from Chicago would bring a hundred thousand dollars in currency. Others said that Judge Eliot would not let the bank go down; that Mr. Moore had allowed this thing to show how strong the bank was. Judge Eliot was in the crowd talking to the people, trying to quiet them, telling them how it was that no bank could stand a run, but it was to no purpose. By noon the farmers from the surrounding country began to come in, and they drew out money in good round sums. It is a most dreadful spectacle, that of a run on a bank. It is enough to make the heart of a business man sink within him to see an excited multitude pulling the vitals right out of an institution of this kind that has for years held the treasure and the confidence of the public.

About one o'clock the following notice was pasted on the front door:

TO THE DEPOSITORS OF THIS BANK.

Owing to an unnecessary and heavy run on this bank it is compelled to suspend payment.

ENOS MOORE.

Then the door was closed and locked, but the crowd grew larger instead of smaller. Those who had no money in the bank — never had

in any bank — were the ones to protest most loudly. There was a general feeling of anger in the crowd. They discovered many points of weakness in Mr. Moore which they had never mentioned before. The excitement had been too much for the old gentleman. His carriage had to be sent for in order that he might be taken home. He was a sick man.

Nearly everyone wanted to see the notice, and read it over and over again.

The crowd did not entirely disappear until after dark, and for a day or two little knots of people continued to gather on the streets and talk about the suspension.

There was a certain class of quiet business men, of course, who did not participate in anything of this kind, but those who were the loudest in their demonstrations during the time of the trouble were the ones who afterwards made boasts of their coolness.

George Moore was in debt to the bank about four thousand dollars, besides his operating capital; that is, if his business had been closed out, it would have been necessary to have gone four thousand dollars into the real estate to pay his debts. Being without capital, and having this note against his property, he was not a little disturbed. It left him without money to buy wheat or to handle his flour.

CHAPTER XVII.

Shortly after Lizzie had gone to her aunt's, Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Eliot went East for the summer, and wished for Lucy to go with them, but Lucy had no wish to leave M —, and declined. The older ladies pressed the matter strongly, urging her to give some reason for refusing so pleasant a prospect; but Lucy had nothing to say, excepting that she would rather stay at home and care for her father and the younger children, and all her mother had to say did not change her mind, or her reason. The truth was she was too deeply interested in George Moore to care to leave home, and even had he not been there, she had no heart for gaieties in which he had no part. So the older ladies reluctantly went without her, and she, much to her father's delight, stayed at home.

Lucy was extremely restless, and found her only relief in some occupation which was either new or arduous enough to take all of her attention. She gave much time to housekeeping, and took such care of the younger members of the family as to cause them to remember that summer as one of the pleasantest in their lives. Her father stayed at home with her more than had been his wont, and they were both surprised to find how much they had in common. There had always been the usual love which exists between father and daughter,

but this summer developed an increased love, and a companionship such as rarely exists between people bearing the relation which existed between these two.

One evening Judge Eliot brought Dick Herrick home to tea with him and kept him through the evening. The judge had lost none of his admiration for Dick; in fact, the course of the young man, since his good fortune, had been such as to win the good will of all who knew him. The evening in question, Dick had gone to the judge's office on some business just before the latter was ready to go home, and the talk had continued down the stairs and to the door of the carriage, which was waiting for the older gentleman.

"Jump in, Richard, and go up and take tea with us," said the judge, as he reached the carriage; "my wife isn't at home, but my daughter is, and we will try and make it pleasant for you."

Dick hesitated a moment, and then quietly accepted the invitation. He had had many invitations to partake in the festivities of the village society, but had rarely accepted. There were many who were willing to see much in Dick Herrick since his increase of fortune who would not have seen it before. From such Dick instinctively turned away; but this invitation from Judge Eliot was a different thing, and he recognized it as such.

When Dick had gone home, the judge said to his daughter: "That is a young man of much promise, Lucy, and I shall be much surprised if he does not make his mark in the world. I am more than pleased with his course, and am surprised at the breadth of his thought. For one who has had so few apparent advantages, he is wonderfully well informed. We must keep an eye on him and have him here oftener."

And so it happened that when Dick was in town he was frequently at the Eliot's, and finally, before the summer was over, had taken a position among the young people of the village which he filled with ease.

During the early part of the summer Lucy saw comparatively little of George Moore. After Adam's departure he felt more than ever the responsibilities of his business, but more than that the disappointment in regard to Lizzie had cut him deeply, and he did not recover easily. He tried to reason himself into the belief that he still had an opportunity to win her, but in his inmost consciousness he knew her last word had been final. Yet, had Lizzie been in M—— he would have still tried to gain her affections, but as she was away the case seemed more hopeless than it otherwise would.

As the summer advanced he went to call on Lucy occasionally, and at such times the girl was at her brightest. She was a brilliant conversationalist, and in every respect a very fascinating girl at any

time, but the presence of the man she loved made her doubly keen and increased her beauty. She was so witty, so beautiful and so charming at these times, that George could not but remember, in a dim way, that she was altogether a pleasant companion, and this remembrance induced him to go again. Lucy descended to no vulgar arts in trying to make herself remembered. What she did was done partly through instinct; it was the natural outgrowth of her love; and the rest was the result of a fixed purpose to make herself as pleasant as she could.

The next summer, when the bank failed, and her father told her the condition in which the failure had left George, she was very much troubled for him. She tried to think of some way in which to induce her father to help him without betraying herself. She knew the judge was amply able to do a thing of that kind if he cared to, and she also knew he would do it if he had any idea what was in her heart. But her desire was to find some way of accomplishing her purpose without showing her own feelings in the matter. While she was thinking how to accomplish this, something happened which made it unnecessary that the judge should do anything for George's relief, and Lucy was spared the necessity of an appeal to her father.

During the early part of the bank troubles Lucy saw some little of George, and her sympathy was so delicate and so heartfelt that the dim idea of her graces developed into a very distinct idea in the mind of the young man that she was a very pleasant companion. Still he wanted Lizzie, and looked back on the time he spent with her as the best part of his life, and saw no future without her; yet this want did not keep him from accepting the sympathy which was so pleasant to him at this time.

Lizzie was still in Brooklyn with her aunt. When she went there her intention had been to return to M—— at the beginning of the following winter, but her relatives had begged hard for more time, and Mr. and Mrs. Webb had written for her to stay, so she had spent the winter there. In the spring she talked of going back home, as she called it, not so much because she cared to leave the Southwick's as from a sense of duty owed to those who had always been so kind to her. She had been very happy with her eastern relatives. The surroundings of their homes and their kindness to her had made the year spent with them pass rapidly, and she had no great desire to leave them. When she spoke of going to M——, Miss Southwick asked her to defer any arrangements for a couple of weeks, and at the end of that time proposed a plan for going to Europe for the summer. This plan was no sudden thought; it had been arranged in order to keep Lizzie from returning to the Webb's, Miss Southwick thinking that every delay was bringing her so much nearer to her desire of keeping Lizzie with her permanently.

The European trip was a thing Lizzie had long desired, and, after giving the matter some consideration, she decided to go, and in June Miss Southwick, her brother's wife and daughter and Lizzie took passage for Europe.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The bank went into the hands of a receiver. Everybody wanted his opinion as to how it would pay out. He said to all, during the course of the week following the closing of the bank, that he would be able to tell them in a few days, but he thought that it would pay out all right. That's what they always say about a bank, after a failure. Mr. Moore said that, notwithstanding the fact that his losses had been heavy, as soon as the securities could be realized on, and his personal property sold, that it would pay every dollar and leave him a comfortable fortune besides.

George Moore was not a little disturbed. He knew that while all this might be so, he would have to form a new alliance; that he would have to have a new banker, or that he would have to have more money from some source. His first plan was to make a loan. He saw a broker in Chicago, had an appraisement of the property made, and the broker wrote to all of his correspondents, but without success. The moneyed men said times were close, and they didn't feel like loaning money on manufacturing property; that it was of no account unless the mill was running and making money. George said that it was making money, but they would have answered, if they had answered at all, that the man who could run the mill was part of the property, and a mill had to have proper connections from all sides to make money, which it would not have in case of foreclosure. The receiver of the bank sent for him one day and told him that as his notes fell due they would have to be paid. Being, as he was, the son of the owner of the bank, public opinion would be against a renewal or extension.

"You know," said the receiver, "people understand that your father advanced you the money to buy this property and to operate it, and some of them say that the expenditures on the mill in buying new machinery have been quite large and have contributed to his embarrassment."

"Well, I suppose if I pay the paper as it comes due, it will be all right as far as public opinion goes. I guess they can't growl about my part in the matter."

"Certainly, that'll be all right," said the receiver.

"You were suspicious that I could not meet the paper, were you not, Mr. Martin?"

"I will confess, Mr. Moore, that I didn't see how you could. The

money coming from your father to rebuild and operate the mill, and then you being in debt to the bank, I would naturally suppose that this debt represented something that you did not have."

"I have the money and will meet the paper," said George.

Why he said this he did not know. He did not have the money, nor did he know where he was to get it. But he felt determined that with public feeling as it was in regard to his father's affairs and his connection with them, that he would work through. From the bank George walked back to the mill. He walked into the office, scratched his head, turned around three or four times, and turned back down street. He went to Judge Eliot's office.

"Well, what's the matter, George?" said the judge.

"I am here for professional advice—business advice. The bank holds nineteen thousand dollars of my paper. Fifteen thousand of it is for operating capital. I can grind out my stock, sell my flour, close up the accounts and pay off the fifteen thousand dollars. Then there is four thousand dollars to come out of the property. The mill, the water power and all are worth thirty-five thousand dollars, if they are worth a cent. The net profit for the last year is not less than twelve thousand dollars."

"Well, that's a good, clear statement, young man," said Judge Eliot.

"It will show you just how I stand."

"How long would it take you to close up your business?"

"I could grind my wheat, cash every barrel of flour and close all my accounts inside of thirty days. This would pay off the fifteen thousand dollars that I speak of."

"That's good. How long would it take you to make an invoice?"

"I could finish it in two or three days. The making of an invoice is not a difficult matter in a flour mill. All I have to do is to re-weigh the wheat, count the flour and take the rest from the books."

"Well, you do that, George, and we'll see what can be done. In the meanwhile I'd like to look over your books."

"That's all right. I'd be very glad to have you do it."

George went back to the mill in better spirits, though he had no definite encouragement. He immediately made his arrangements for taking a yield, which he could do very readily, as his mill was arranged, and then to re-weigh the remaining portion of wheat in the mill. He need not have done this latter thing, as the cut-off and taking the yield and his books would have shown the amount of wheat on hand, but for the sake of making it clearer to the judge he determined to do this. He immediately went to work that way.

The next morning Judge Eliot was in the mill office by eight o'clock. He took off his coat, and, in company with George, com-

menced to go through the books, and he did go through them after his own thorough fashion. Not an account was overlooked. He even took occasion to go over some of the additions. George took some of the books to his office that night, and the two together were with them until late.

"You've got a good set of books, George. You've taken good care of them, but I must take nothing for granted. I must see everything for myself. Some people say that I'm an old foggy, but I can't help it."

"I am very glad to have you do just what you are doing. I want you to know that everything is all right."

"Well, I guess we can finish them to-morrow." And so they did.

The next day George had his invoice complete and the balance sheet drawn off, and it showed about five hundred dollars better than George had represented to the judge.

"Now, you see," said Judge Eliot, "if I hadn't gone through all this thing myself, I wouldn't have known that it was all right. This shows up very well."

"What have you to say, judge, about what I am to do?"

There was still enough of the boy about George that he could not retain his impatience for something decided at once.

"Well, George, I haven't anything to say just now. I'll think about it and see." And without another word he picked up his hat and went out of the mill office. Here was more suspense.

Day after day passed and not a word from the judge. The mill kept running along the same as before; George continued to buy wheat and sell his flour, but all the time he was laboring under the heavy weight of suspense. He looked out from under a heavy load. From day to day he felt more and more as if there were no hope for him. One afternoon, about three o'clock, something over a week after the judge had been at the mill, he saw him coming towards the office. He felt that the time had come when he would know what the judge had to say.

"There are one or two points that I want to look into again, George. I'd like to look at the books. Just lay them out here, if you please." The judge worked over them for nearly three hours without saying a word. When he got through, he said: "Well, that's all this evening. Good night."

George was just a little encouraged, because the judge had been there; he saw he still had the business in his mind; but it was a very meagre kind of satisfaction. The next day, about nine o'clock, he received a note from the judge asking him to call at his office at his convenience; that he would be there all day. George's heart was in his throat in a minute.

“At my convenience?” he said, referring to the note; “it is convenient for me to go right now.” He put on his hat and coat and left the office at once. He knew there was something ahead for him. Arriving at the judge’s office he found him busy.

“Be seated, George; I’ll be through here very soon.”

A half hour of waiting. There is no use saying anything about it; it was a long, dreary half hour—a half hour heavily weighted. George felt a pressure on his breathing apparatus that was almost physical. The gentleman with whom the judge was doing business walked out.

“George, I have thought over your affairs very carefully. I have examined into the condition of your business so that I think I understand it. I think that it is a good business to make money at, and I think you can handle it very well, but you haven’t the security to offer in the regular way which will give you the capital that you want. When your father was in a position to help you that was another thing. I can think of nothing else for you to do than to take in a partner with capital. That is my advice.”

“That is all right,” said George, a little provoked that it had taken the judge so long to find out all this; “that’s all right, but where is the partner with the capital?”

“Well, I’ve been thinking about that. I know a man who will probably do as I advise in this matter. In fact, the money is with me to invest, but you know I’ve got to be very careful under such circumstances.”

“Who is the man?” said George.

“Well, we’ll discuss that later, George. If you had a partner with ten thousand dollars in cash you could take up all your paper by borrowing ten thousand more, which you could do if you had more capital in your business. You’ve got ten thousand dollars additional basis for credit. Do you feel like disposing of a third interest in your mill for ten thousand dollars?”

“If you had asked me that question two or three weeks ago, I’d have said no. As there’s nothing else for me to do but to take it, I am glad to do it.”

“Don’t be in a hurry.”

“It certainly looks to be the best of anything I can do.”

“I think it is,” said the judge. “It would certainly be a difficult matter for you to do differently under the peculiar circumstances which control you. Now, if you want to close it up, I can give you the young man’s name, and you can talk to him yourself, and then I will settle the matter up for you.”

“I am under obligations to you, judge. I suppose I may now ask to whom I am to go? Where can I meet him?”

The judge began to grin, and said: "You will probably find the young man down at your mill. His name is Richard Herrick."

CHAPTER XIX.

The difficulties were solved. The money troubles were ended.

A young man, or an older one for that matter, who is possessed of even ordinary ability, whose purposes are conscientious, who has ordinary ambition, will, when placed in a position of responsibility, always rise to the occasion. He exceeds the anticipations of his friends. It was so with Richard Herrick.

Business was hardly so profitable during the next year as it had been in the past. New process mills were springing up in all directions, and the mill of G. W. Moore & Co. had to meet competition as to the quality and cost of its goods in their own town. At least this was so during the latter part of the partnership year. Mr. Cooke, the New York commission merchant to whom George had been consigning his flour, stepped into the office one afternoon and said:

"I have come to tell you something about making flour."

"We're always ready to learn," said George.

"Well, sir, you've got to learn. I can tell you something that you don't know. Mason & Co's 'Kitchen Queen' is just knocking the spots off you in prices, and then they are making as pretty a clear flour as comes to New York, and they're beating you forty cents a barrel, and people can't get enough of it."

"What kind of wheat do they use? Dick, you were down there the other day."

"Using the same kind we are."

"Do you know where you can get some of their flour?"

"Yes, they've got some of it down to Foster's grocery."

"Bringing it right to your own door, are they?"

"Yes; there's been a little of it coming in here."

"But hold on," said Cooke, "I've got some of their flour. I brought it from New York with me. I tell you I'm going to show you something about grinding," and he began to unroll a little package. He put a blue box full of the flour on the table.

"Now, there sir, just feel of that — just as sharp and nice — feels like sand. That's the way we like to have it in New York. You want to grind with sharp burrs; you want to grind high. Here, get me a sample of your flour — bring it in here, and bring me some water. I'll show you where it comes in."

Mr. Cooke made a couple of doughs. "Now, here's the 'Kitchen Queen,' and here's yours. See, your flour's beginning to work down; getting kind of soft and sticky. Now, here's Mason's flour—don't

she stand up nice, though?—strong and white. Look at the difference in the color,” and he put the two doughs together and showed them in all lights. “Big difference, isn’t there? I tell you, Moore, you people have got to wake up; you’re getting behind. Here, let’s lay these doughs down in the sun and let them dry out, and while we’re doing that we’ll mix up the clear. That clear flour’s selling for more than your straight. I wouldn’t tell you all this if I hadn’t been doing business with you so long. You’ve got a good mill here, and there’s no reason why you shouldn’t make as good flour as anybody. Now, see here—see how those patents are drying out?”

“Don’t the difference in the age of the flour make some difference?” said Moore.

“Now, just quit talking that way. Don’t blind yourself; don’t throw dust in your own eyes; it’s the difference between yellow and white, don’t you see?”

“I see it,” said Dick. “They’ve got a better flour than we have, and that’s all there is to it.”

“Now, that’s business,” said Mr. Cooke. “That’s the way to talk, Mr. Herrick. Now, all you’ve got to do is to crack your burrs and grind higher. That’s the way to do it.”

“Yes, and when we do that we’ve got to put in something besides the burrs to clean the bran,” said Dick.

(They were re-grinding the bran on stones.)

“They’re using the Depeer machines down at Mason’s,” said Dick: “and I understand they’ve got more than nine inches of skirt on the burr.”

“That’s it, and they’re grinding high, and they’re cracking the burrs.”

After this talk about milling, and some other that was not about milling, Mr. Cooke left that evening for New York. George and Dick promised that they would do what they could to bring the flour up, and would send samples to New York as soon as the changes were made. Dick went down to visit Mason & Co.’s mill, but he did not go into the mill without first visiting the office. However, he did not tell them his purpose. He asked them about the bran machine, and the wheat cleaning machinery, and they invited him to go into the mill and see the work. As he passed along the grinding floor he saw that they were using the diamond machine for facing on their middlings burrs, and noticed, what he was more glad to see, that a wheat burr which had been taken up on account of its being hot in the neck had not less than seventy furrows.

“Do you crack that stone?” said Richard.

“Yes,” said Mr. Mason, though he was not disposed to be very explicit. “The machines are on the next floor,” and they went up stairs.

Richard did not take much interest in the bran machines, and he thought that he could arrange that very readily himself. He went home, cut out the eye of the burr until there was only ten inches of skirt, and then he split the lands, of which there were forty originally, which gave him eighty furrows. All this he did, one at a time, while the mill was running. They ordered a bran cleaner and in time were ready to try the experiment with the cracked burrs and higher grinding.

"Well, how do you like the flour, Dick?" said Moore, after they had been running a while.

"It feels sharper, but I can't say that I like it. I guess you might send a sample down to New York to-night." And there came a report by wire: "Grinding improved. Color not up. Look for holes in your bolting cloth."

Dick could not help but smile at the last phrase.

"Well, Webb, what do you think of all this?" he asked.

"Well, there's one thing I think, Dick, and that is that you can't keep these burrs which have the narrow lands in face while you're cracking them."

"I guess that's so."

After this they changed their grinding. It was neither so high as had been recommended to them, nor so low as it had been before; it was a compromise. They didn't crack the burrs with a pick, but went over them with a diamond machine which they purchased.

About this time a great millwright happened along. He knew all about Mason & Co.'s milling, and he knew all about everybody's milling, and he said the secret of their milling was rebolting and scalping.

"Now, you put in my scalping apparatus and do some rebolting, and you'll beat the world. If you do that you've got to put in six new bolts."

There was a good deal of talk, and finally the mill was shut down to make the change. Four thousand dollars went into it, which included the purchase of three pairs of smooth rolls in addition to their germ rolls, which they had before. The plan of this arrangement was to have four reels on which to bolt the chop, and one reel for each smooth roll. They took a little flour off each of the smooth roll reels and sent the cut-off to the chop chest. They sent everything which went through a No. 4 cloth of the tailings reel, or germ reel as it was called then, to a dusting reel. The accumulation of the dust room went into a reel, where it was bolted, and the middlings from this went to the dusting reel. The dustings from the dusting reel were squeezed on a set of smooth rolls, bolted on a reel by itself, and the cut-off from that reel sent to the chop chest. The returns under the last reel of this chest went back to the head. Said this great millwright:

"You see, everything is rebolted. Everything's got to come out clean and it keeps a-going until it is clean."

In time the mill was ready to start on the basis of the new arrangement. The great millwright had impressed George Moore with the idea that the mill was going to be a success, and that their troubles were ended.

"How does it look, Dick?" said Moore.

"Well, you know, the stock hasn't got around in a very good shape yet, and it's pretty hard to tell."

Late that afternoon they made some doughs to compare with Mason & Co.'s flour. It was improved, but not up to the mark. The flour was still soft in the dough, and then it dried out a little yellow.

"Well, maybe it'll be better in the morning," said Dick.

"Yes, I guess it will," answered Moore. "The mill will be warmed up by that time."

In the morning they were both eager to note the result.

"Looks good, does she this morning, Dick?"

"We had a good run last night," said Dick, "but I can't say that it exactly suits."

"Well, maybe I'm mistaken. We'll make some doughs and see." They did so.

"Well, this won't do. I declare I believe this flour's worse than it was before we made the change," said Dick.

"What? How's that?"

"Well, I think we've spent our money for nothing."

"Maybe the millers don't understand their business," said Moore.

"Well, maybe they don't, and I'm pretty sure I don't. But here comes the millwright."

The great millwright walked into the office in a very large manner.

"Well, how is she this morning?" he said.

"We'll look around and see." And they did.

"Things look pretty well," said he, "but they're not grinding just right."

"Maybe we had better go down stairs and straighten it out," said Richard, and the great millwright went down below and set the burrs, and after a time they tested the flour again, but it was little, if any, better.

"Well, I was a little afraid of it," said the millwright. "I wanted to do this thing as cheap as I could for you, but there's some of that stock up stairs that needs another purification, and I guess you'll have to get another purifier, another pair of smooth rolls and another reel, and I know that'll fix you all right. You'll have the best mill in the state and make the best flour. If you do that you'll have one pair of

smooth rolls more than Mason has, besides having the same purifier arrangements."

"What'll that cost?"

"Oh, I don't know; we'll make it as cheap as we can. You see we'll have to put in about three extra elevators. I guess it'll cost about eighteen hundred dollars."

"Well, that's awful," said Moore.

"If we put in that machinery, will you guarantee the result?"

"Oh, yes," said the great millwright, "I'll do that."

They put in the machinery, but Dick was not at all confident. Moore, owing to the eloquence of the great millwright, was still somewhat impressed, especially when in his presence. They put in an extra conveyor to carry the returns to the chop elevator, that is, they ran in the dustings and stock from the roll reel into this, where they had it all consolidated into one return stream. It was not long until they were ready to make another start. At first the flour looked pretty well and Moore was encouraged, but in a few days it was worse than ever. Everybody but the great millwright was disheartened. In this emergency he claimed to have found a missing link. Again they spent a little more money but with no satisfactory result.

They were fast walking into their capital.

"Well, by the time we get through with this, if we ever do, we'll have no money to run the mill with," said Dick.

"It looks that way, certainly. We've already spent more than we've made this year," added Webb.

"Things look awful bad in the mill," said Dick. "In spite of all our machinery, we are not cleaning our feed. This thing can't go on much longer."

"Can't we get a miller from Mason & Co.?"

"I don't know. Both their men have been with them a good while."

CHAPTER XX.

Everybody about the mill was disheartened. They had a mill well equipped as to the quantity and quality of machinery, but then there was the mill of Mason & Co., which as far as any one could see was in every way inferior to theirs in respect to machinery and general equipment, but which was making better flour than they could think of making. The little mills around the country were competing with them in quality, and altogether the situation was distressing. The great millwright came around again, and told what he had been doing for various mills.

"Why," said he, "Jones & Co., down here, were in a terrible bad shape when I took hold of them, but now they are all right," and he

told stories to illustrate how very simple some people were and how very smart he was. He did it with an air of self-complacency and ease, and there was a sly grin playing around his mouth while all this was going on, which betokened what he would have regarded as modesty. He told how he would go into a mill, how he would look around, and how he would know that they were doing poor work, and by a few changes and the addition of a little machinery everything would move along satisfactorily; how he had agreed with the parties to give them thirty days trial of the new machinery before they would pay for it, and they called him into the office and said it was all right, and how well pleased they were, and gave him a check for the whole thing the second or third day after the mill was started.

"I wish you could do some of that kind of buisness for us," said Dick.

"Well, I've been thinking a good deal about your mill since I was here, and I have about come to the conclusion that there's too much draft on the burrs."

"Why, it's the same draft and the same dress that they've got in Mason's mill."

"Yes, but I believe Mason's burrs run a little slower than yours. Why, down here to Jonesboro, at Crabs & Crider's —" and then began another story about how great the millwright was and how simple were Crabs & Crider in comparison. But Dick brought him around to the point again.

"Would you have us change the speed of our burrs?"

"No, I don't know as I would do that. There's something I don't like to say, but do you know I don't believe your miller knows how to run this kind of a mill."

"Well, get us one that can — that's what we're looking for."

"I think I can get you a man," and it was agreed that the great millwright should furnish a miller. Webb took a secondary position for a time. He had the good sense and good judgment not to resent the idea. "If there's anything about it that I don't know, I want to find it out," he said to himself. The other miller came and told what a great man was this millwright; but he couldn't do anything with the flour. Letters came from New York which suggested that the flour was no better than before — worse, if anything. The mill was losing its eastern trade for a high grade flour.

The great millwright came around again while the new miller was running the mill, and by his aid succeeded in selling them another purifier. Things went along in this way for about a month, without change. Nothing that they could do seemed to rid them of the muddy colored flour. In the dough it was sticky, and it dried out about the color of a piece of manilla paper—yellow. They took a

yield ; four bushels and thirty-eight pounds. They had been figuring on four-thirty. Ruination never stared anyone more squarely in the face. It was an awful condition.

A few days after this time Dick came into the office with a double handful of flour.

"Well, George, what would you say if I were to tell you that we're out of our trouble?"

"I'd think that I'd want to see you prove it."

"Well, I am not prepared to prove it; but here's some as nice clear flour as you want to see. Take it and look at it and dough it. I am satisfied with it."

"Well, Dick, I'm glad to hear you say that. You don't often go off half cocked. Tell me about it. What have you been doing? What did you find out?"

"Well, you know we've been returning everything. The dustings have been returning to the first chop reel, and the cut-offs have been returning, and the dust room stock has been returning, and the second middlings cut-off and the tailings—everything's been going into that long conveyor and going back to first chop reel. Well, awhile ago we just had the biggest choke in that conveyor that you ever saw. The stream of returns got so big that the elevator wouldn't carry it, and it backed up into the conveyor and stripped every flight. The consequence was that there were no returns, there was nothing going back. Well, I don't know what it was led me to do it, but before I knew how bad the choke was—before I knew they would have to shut down to straighten it out, I run my hands into the clear flour stock; and here's the flour, you see. It's like walking from darkness into daylight."

By this time Moore had a dough made of it.

"George, it'll dry out whiter than it is there in your hand. It'll be whiter when it's dry than it is when it's wet."

"Well, it looks nice, it looks nice," said George.

"You see this is the flour directly from the stone chop and the tailings. The dustings and cut-off and the dust room stocks are still running into the choke. They're running out on the floor now."

"Well, how do you know what kind of flour that'll make?" said George.

"Why, I know that if we take the dust room stock out it'll make just as good flour as this. I looked at it in its natural state. Now that there are no returns, the cut-off from the chop is nearly as nice as the flour itself, and there are very little dustings from the middlings because they are so well dusted before they get into the dusting reel."

"Well, what are you going to do with this stock, this dustings and cut-off that you speak of?"

"I haven't fully made up my mind as to all the details, but on general principles I'll tell you this: I'm going to bolt this stock by itself; I am going to handle it just as independently as if it were in another mill. I'm going to shut down this mill within five minutes and I'll not start it up until it's ready to make decent flour."

There was a quiet, undemonstrative enthusiasm in Dick when he was very much interested. He was never excited, but in times like these spoke in an earnest, forceful way, which to those who knew him indicated that he was intensely interested and somewhat excited. He shut down the mill and sacked up the choke, and told the men about the mill to go home and not come back till morning. He went home to work out his plans. They developed something like this: He took the chop and handled it practically as it had been handled before; that is, the coarse middlings had been separated from the rest of the chop on the first reel. Then the flour was bolted out on three others, and the fine middlings tailed off from the last one and sent into a dustings reel. According to the original arrangement everything from this point began returning, but it was here that Dick commenced to make the changes. The dustings and cut-off from the last reel he sent into a reel by themselves, and into this reel also went a cut-off from the second middlings and the cut-off from the tailings or germ rolls reel. The dust room stock, which formerly went into the returns, he sent into the red dog. There was one coarse cut-off which went to a No. 4 cloth at the tail of the tailings roll which he sent to a pair of smooth rolls by itself and re-bolted on an independent reel, and sent the tail and cut-off from this reel into the red dog. The tail of the reel which re-bolted his dustings, cut-off, etc., he sent to a pair of smooth rolls by itself and then bolted it out on an independent reel. He re-rolled and bolted again the tail from the last roller reduction and re-bolted it as independently as before, and sent the final tail and cut-off to the red dog. Here was the whole thing in a nut-shell. The stock kept going ahead all the time. There was no going back, no returning of a lot of foul stock which had no way to get out of the mill except to wear its way through the flour cloth, or to be blown out through the purifier by a very circuitous route, or to get into the feed pile.

By this everlasting system of returning the middlings could not but be dusty—very dusty. After they had passed through the dusting reel they were even then too dusty to be purified so as to make anything but gray soft middlings after they had passed through the purifiers. Everything in the mill seemed to be loaded with the nasty gray stuff from the returns, because of the heavy volume of stock which could not get out of the mill in any other way. The red dog was very rich, and it, in turn, worked over into the feed pile because there were

returns back to the red dog from the red dog reels. Because the middlings on the purifier were soft the tailings were rich. The returns operated to the disadvantage of everything.

It took Dick but a few days to make these changes. He only had to buy one piece of new cloth ; all the rest of the work was done by spouting. It was a simple question of separations ; thus no new machinery was needed. He already had in the mill all the reels that he could want. Feeling as sure as he did that, as a matter of theory and observation, he was correct, he could not but feel a little nervous because of his great hopefulness of the results of so radical a change.

CHAPTER XXI.

The new mill had started, and it was a *new* mill. The machinery was the same, everything looked the same, but a change from old to new in the matter of system, of reductions and separations, could not have been greater. It was a distinct mill from the one of a few days past.

There was no mixing of products, in that each grade of stock was handled and reduced by itself. Everything went straight ahead from the wheat to the flour packers and the feed pile.

For a little while after the mill started—an hour or two, say—there was the old stock to work out of the mill. There were no middlings in the bins. Dick had everything ground out clean. The bins were set down so that all of the stock that went into them was new. Dick had been able to see the flour from the chop reels during the time that they had had the choke. The flour from the dustings and returns he had to wait for. The expression “returns” is used here as meaning the cut-off from the last chop reel. It is spoken of as returns in a great many mills to-day, though there are no returns in such mills. At all events the flour from this stock was as white and bright as that from the break reels. Dick could not understand this ; he could not understand why it should be so nice, and still be made from the dustings which had come through a No. 12 cloth and the cut-off, because it was not good enough for clear flour ; it went into the other reels by itself and the product was as bright and white as the flour from the chop. He did not see through it. If he had thought about it long enough he would probably have realized that it was so because the stock was soft enough in the reels which bolted it so that it could bolt white. That part of the chop which was cut-off on the last chop was rendered sticky by the presence of fine middlings in that reel, and the dustings were ragged and flat because it was bolted though a No. 12 cloth on a dusting reel, which reel contained coarse and fine middlings, and for that reason could not bolt white. But taking the dustings which had

gone through the No. 12 cloth and the cut-off which had passed through a No. 14, he had relatively a soft product, and by putting it into a reel by itself it was soft enough to bolt bright and white, as it did. Then there was the tail from this reel which was in good condition, being well scalped, as we may understand by considering that it had passed through flour numbers before going into this reel. This stock—that is, the tail of this reel—after having been rolled on smooth rolls produced also a nice flour. It could hardly do otherwise. All this was a source of surprise to Dick. However, he did not reason much about it at this time, being too busy and too much interested in the development of the new product in the mill since the change had been made. He was willing to accept results of this kind without considering the reason.

Notwithstanding the improvement in the clear flour, the really great change came in the middlings. Their state of purification was all that could have been desired. The load of stock having been taken out of the reels by the dropping of the return system, the middlings were perfectly dusted. They went on the machine in a bright, sharp condition—a condition which rendered poor purification impossible. The tails to the purifiers were thinner than he had ever seen them before, and the middlings brighter and nicer than he had ever thought to see come from a machine. He had been in the habit of trying to purify his second middlings before, but it didn't take long to show him that it wasn't necessary to purify his second middlings here. They were scalped on a No. 9 cloth after the reduction of the first middlings by the millstones, and anything that went over the No. 9 went to the tailings, consequently anything which went through the No. 9 was in good condition, the first middlings having been almost perfectly purified. The scalping arrangement was the same as when they had the old return system. They re-purified the second middlings at that time for conscience sake; they looked so bad that they thought they ought to run them over a machine, and so did it, but without any benefit to the stock, whatever benefit it might have been to the conscience. No one who has never seen the experiment tried, through necessity or otherwise, can realize the great change that is made in the purification of middlings by thoroughly dusting them, and no one can know how entirely impossible it is to dust middlings where there are returns going into the head of the chop chest unless he has been through the mill.

Dick was able to realize that there had been as great a change in the patent as there had been in the clear flour. His satisfaction in the change that morning when he got the mill to running was not merely from the consciousness of having done a good thing, but he felt at once that he had saved himself and his partner from business disaster.

All of these things developed within a day of the starting of the new mill. Dick spent his time in the mill watching the various products, while George Moore, in his anxiety, made numerous trips from the office to the upper floor to see Webb and Dick and ask how things were moving. While he hoped and inwardly believed that everything would be as Dick said, he could not but have misgivings. He at least wished to confirm what he looked for and hoped for. We say that some things are too good to be true, and when we see these good things coming towards us we doubt them; we look for some compensating drawback, and if it does not come it takes time to settle down to the realization of what belongs to us.

"Well, how is everything?" George would say to Dick.

"As far as I am able to see it is all right," and then he would show George the various products, who, however, had never paid enough attention to practical milling to be able to fully appreciate what he saw. Like most office men his knowledge was confined to making doughs of the principle products and examining the feed pile.

In the afternoon Moore approached Dick and said:

"Is this all the feed we are making?"

"Where did you get?" said Dick.

"I got it out of the regular feed spouts," he said. "You didn't change them, did you?"

"No, there was no change."

"Well, this is the cleanest feed I ever saw."

"That's what I think."

The feed was clean. The mill was not overloaded with a lot of dead stock which it was wallowing around and crowding over towards the feed pile, but each part had only its own natural work to do and for that reason was not overworked.

It was just before it began to get dark that the two partners went into the office to examine the samples of flour. They found that both their patent and their clear compared in every sense favorably with that of Mason & Co.'s. The low-grade was not so good. If they had had Mason & Co.'s feed they would have found it a little bit richer than their's. The reason for the difference was that in Moore & Co.'s mill they were pulverizing some of the feed and running it into low-grade flour. They made cleaner feed than their rivals and in the same degree made poorer low-grade flour, and just that much more of it.

They sent samples of the flour to New York and asked that the opinion of the trade be telegraphed to them at once. The morning of the day that they were expecting an answer a flour buyer from Boston came into the mill office. He was recognized as being a good judge of flour. George had sold him flour a year or two before, but only in small lots. Said he:

"I am looking for a first-class patent, but do not find it."

"I guess we can accommodate you," said Moore.

"Oh, yes, that's what they all say, but they haven't got the goods; that is, there ain't anybody that's got the kind of goods that I want that hasn't a market for it. One of your neighbors down the road here is making the kind of flour that I want. What's the reason you can't make it? Don't you use the same wheat that they do?"

"Oh, yes, we both buy our wheat from the same section, and, you might say, the same farmers, and I guess you'll find our flour's what you're looking for," and he called to Dick, who was on the packing floor, and asked him to bring a sample of patent.

Dick brought in a large sample of it and laid it down on the table.

"Why, that looks good," and he picked it up, felt of it, and made a dough. "Well, one can't carry all these things in their eye," he said, and he pulled a sample box out of his pocket and made a dough from the sample.

"You've got a good patent," he said, but he said no more as to its quality in a direct manner.

"What'll you give for two hundred barrels of it?"

The buyer named a price, and it was quite fifty cents more than they had been able to get out of their flour on the same market. This was the kind of talk they wanted to hear. They sold him the flour. That afternoon they received a dispatch from New York which confirmed their hopes and which offered them a price to arrive which was like a streak of daylight through their previous troubles.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The change from the return system, as it was called, to a straight method of bolting by the abandonment of returns, might be figured out to mark a revolutionary epoch in milling. It meant a revolution in the business condition, and in the work done by many at the time when a change was made by a large number of mills. However, it would hardly be fair to dignify the change from that which was wrong to that which was right by calling it a revolution. It was certainly a change from wrong to right; it made the new process of milling a success; it made purification a possibility; it showed the millers of the country what a natural milling product was, something which they could not know during the days of returns. They had the natural product of the mill mixed with a lot of impure stock, which rendered it unrecognizable when compared with the same class of stock, or the stock found in the same place in the mill, under more favorable conditions.

No change was ever made in any mill which did not carry with it

unexpected troubles and annoyance such as was not looked for in the beginning. Such was the case in Moore & Co.'s mill. As they looked back on the change in after years it all seemed pleasant and nice, and none of the difficulties which attended their efforts at this time left an impression with them. A miller may plan a change in his mill, and feel so certain as to how it is going to come out that he is willing to assert that no further changes are necessary in order to accomplish results that he expects at that time. But it very seldom turns out in this way. It may be there is an improvement, but one change suggests another; unexpected difficulties turn up, either in a mechanical way or in the character of the stock as it passes through the mill; material which it was expected might take a certain course is found entirely unsuited for its expected classification. When the miller makes the examination he is disappointed; he finds that it belongs in another part of the mill, and it is altogether possible that there is considerable difficulty in the way of getting it there. Possibly a long conveyor has to be constructed, and then, maybe, an elevator has to be fixed. Having determined the necessities for such devices, it then remains to locate them. A good position for the conveyor has to be sought, and then the means of driving, and all this is fraught with some difficulty; shafting has to be taken down, possibly, in order to locate a driving pulley; next comes an elevator—a clear way within certain limits, has to be looked up for that; probably it has to run through a stock bin;—and altogether much has to be done to get everything around to a working condition again. These mechanical difficulties are puzzling and annoying, but they belong to a class of annoyances which are soon forgotten; there is nothing vital in them. But it is the essential milling troubles, those which have to do with the flow of stock, which leave the most lasting impression on the mind of the miller. This is something which has solely to do with the matter of his business, his trade, and, in the end, the commercial prosperity of his mill. A mill may be ever so well constructed mechanically, and present the finest arrangements, but still not be a mill in all that that word implies; it is a machine. We hear of mills where the spouting is put together with blue-headed screws, and everything is nicely varnished or painted; but then we must know that blue-headed screws and varnish and paint have nothing to do with the production of cheap flour, or flour which will have a respectable standing in the market.

Moore & Co.'s mill had only been running a few of days when the question of yield came up. The great millwright had been around. Moore took him up stairs to show him the flour and the middlings and all. He wished to make him feel badly.

“Well,” said he, with a very large air, as he stuck his thumbs in the arm-holes of his vest and threw his shoulders back and his head in

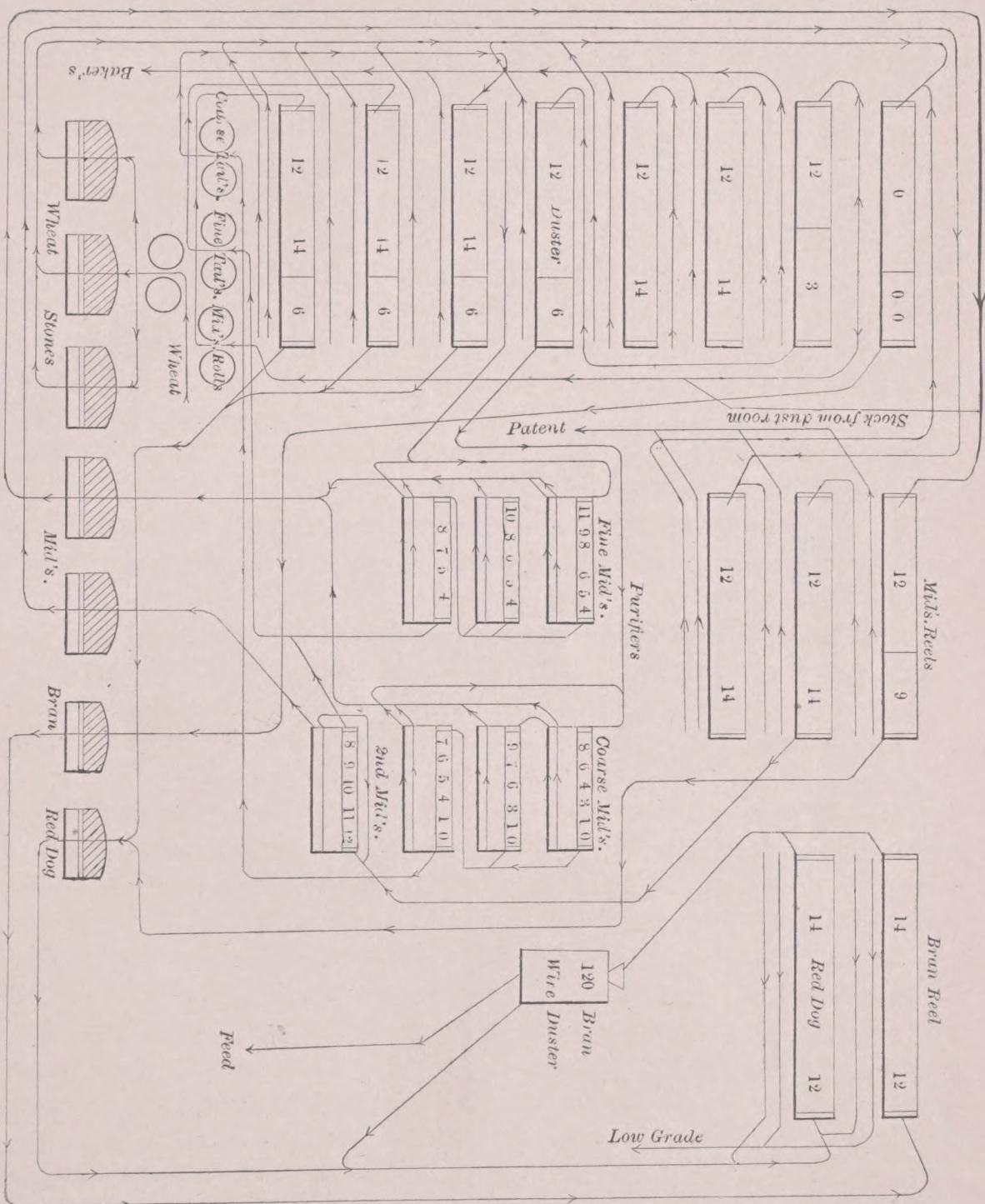


DIAGRAM OF MOORE & CO'S MILL BEFORE THE CHANGE.

the air, "I guess you feel all right now, don't you, Moore? I guess I straightened you out all right, didn't I? You have nothing to complain about now, have you?"

"Well, no, I guess not," said Moore; "but I can't see that you have anything to do with this. I don't know that you are at all responsible for the results as you now see them."

"How's that—how's that? What do you mean, Mr. Moore?"

"Well, I mean just this, to be frank with you: you didn't do our milling any good. We gave you every chance, and Dick came in here and fixed it all up as you see it."

The great millwright was nonplussed for a time, but he looked up smiling.

"Now, look here," said he confidentially, "don't you believe anything of that kind. I make a rule never to say anything against anybody, and especially never to say anything against any man's partner, and I'm not going to; but I just want to say this, that I won't tell you all I know, George, because I don't want to say anything against anybody. Now, Dick Herrick's a mighty nice fellow, I guess, and he's mighty sly, but he ain't sly enough for me, and he wants you to think that he straightened out this mill; but I tell you that he hasn't done anything of that kind. I've been millwrighting for twenty years, and I've been about mills, and I say that mill is just as I left it; I know it. Dick may have changed a spout or so, or done something to make it look like a change, but don't you believe that he's done what he says he has."

"Oh, that won't do; that won't do," said Moore. "It's the flour that tells the story, and it's the money there's in it that emphasizes it. No, that won't do."

"Do you want to know how to get twenty-five cents more out of your flour—how to make it twenty-five cents better?"

"Well, I wouldn't object," said George, in a cynical manner.

"Well, I'll tell you. Throw away about fifty cents worth of stock into your feed-pile. You can do all that kind of milling you want to, but that isn't my kind."

"But our yield is lower than ever it was," said George defensively.

"How do you know?"

"Why, look at the feed."

"Ah, that won't do; that won't do, Moore. You never saw as clean feed as that before, did you? And you never thought it could be made, did you?"

"No, I did not."

"Well, it can't. Now let me put a flea in your ear; it can't hurt anything. Just let me tell you something. Don't you say a word to

Dick about it, but just you go and ask him to take a yield, and then see what he'll do—see what he'll say, and you'll find that you've got to account for richer feed than this, and you'll find that just where there's a difference between my flour and the flour you're a making now that there's more than that much difference in the cost; don't say anything to Dick about what I've been telling you."

What had been said made some little impression on George's mind; not much, but just a little; it made him apprehensive. After all, how could so great a change be made in the flour by such simple means? It didn't look reasonable. His own argument did more to lead him towards suspicion than did that of the great millwright. Still, Dick was interested in the mill, and, as George said himself, why should he do this? But yet Dick might be mistaken. Maybe there's something getting away here that we don't know about.

In a short time after this he said to Dick:

"Well, Dick, what do you say to taking a yield?"

"I say that I'd be mighty glad to take one, but you know that won't tell us what we're doing now. There's the old run, which was an expensive one, that will be mixed in with this yield."

They made their cut-off that night, and the next day ground out. Thus the mill had only been running a few days on the new system, and it had a run of several weeks on the return system to effect it. Four bushels and thirty-seven pounds. That was bad. Not quite so bad, however, as another yield which they had taken before.

"We'll run a week," said Dick, "and then take another."

It was a long week to George Moore. Dick was not at all apprehensive, still he was anxious to know the result. Moore fought his suspicions, but the more he thought about it the more anxious he became. It is always so with suspicion; it grows; it will feed on air. If Moore had known just a little about milling he would have looked at the feed as it was carried out of the mill and seen how clean it was. The week ended, as the longest week will, and George was not very tardy in making his calculations.

"Can this be possible?" he said audibly, and he went all over his figures again. He even went over the wheat receipts and the shipping account to verify the packing register, and it was all right there. A mistake was not possible. Four bushels and twenty pounds was better than he could believe. Dick believed it, and another yield taken a week from that time verified its truthfulness. Moore was heartily ashamed of his suspicions, and never said a word about them to Dick Herrick.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Lizzie and her aunt returned from Europe in the fall, and Miss Southwick immediately began to plan for the coming winter. But

Lizzie said she must go home ; that she had stayed away from M—— much too long already. There was decided opposition all around to her going, and not the weakest came from a young gentleman friend of the Southwicks, who tried to persuade Lizzie to make her permanent home in Brooklyn. His suit was warmly encouraged by Miss Southwick. There was no reason why Lizzie should not marry him from her point of view ; he had everything to recommend him. Lizzie acknowledged all this, but said she did not love him, and that this was a sufficient reason for refusing his suit. Her friends contended that if she had not given her heart elsewhere she could learn the lesson of love, and so Lizzie was accused of having left her heart in M——, and could not convince them to the contrary.

She was decided in her resolution to return to M—— by a letter from Mr. Webb saying that his wife was not well. Lizzie only waited long enough to pack her trunk and make necessary preparations before she left Brooklyn.

Mrs. Webb's illness was not a serious matter, yet it was a comfort to have Lizzie in the house, to take charge of things, and cheer and wait upon the invalid. These duties kept her so busy that she had no time to regret leaving her Brooklyn friends, otherwise so great a change in her surroundings might have caused her some regret.

It was about dusk one evening, just after Lizzie's return, that George Moore, in going home from the office, overtook her on her way to Lucy Elliot's to take tea. He had heard that she was at home. In fact, it was his step-mother who gave him the information. This lady no longer looked on Lizzie as an undesirable person—one who must be kept out of George's way at any hazard. The fact that Lizzie had relatives of wealth and position, and that she was likely to be Miss Southwick's heir, made her a more desirable match for George than Mrs. Moore would have supposed possible a couple of years before. Then that lady did not hold so elevated a social position in her own or others' estimation as she had done previous to the bank failure. Her judgments were biased somewhat by this fact.

"If George won't marry Lucy Elliot, and he has had plenty of chance to do it if he intended to, why he might as well marry this girl. She'll probably bring him some money, and she's better without it than some of the girls he might take. If she is the niece of the miller, she is more the niece of the Southwick's." Thus reasoned the lady to herself ; so, when Lizzie came home, she was the first to tell George of it.

When George saw Lizzie ahead of him he quickened his steps until he overtook her. He and Lizzie greeted each other quietly and without visible embarrassment. It was more as though they had seen each other only a week or so before, than if it had been two years since their last meeting. They walked along slowly, talking of Lizzie's trip

to Europe, and comparing impressions of what they had seen there. This was the outward expression. In reality they were each thinking of the changes which had been wrought by time in the other. George thought that Lizzie had changed very little, as was indeed the case. She had simply added a little more self-possession to her bearing. She was less of a girl and more of a woman.

They reached the gate of Judge Elliot's house. Lizzie stepped inside the gate, which George closed after her. They stood a moment to finish what they had been talking about, when George held out his hand to say good-bye. She gave him her's, which he covered with his other, thus holding it in both of his. Then he said quietly, interrogatively :

“ Lizzie ? ”

Lizzie looked up quickly, saw a pair of earnest, questioning eyes looking at her, and dropped her head a little. Then she felt a woman's need of postponement and rallied. She drew her hand from his, threw up her head a little, gave him a half smile, and said :

“ I'm afraid Lucy is waiting for me, Mr. Moore. I must go now. Good evening.”

Then she turned abruptly and walked quickly up to the front door, leaving George in a dazed, uncertain condition. Was it possible that she cared for him, or had she evaded him only through motives of delicacy—through a desire to save him further pain and humiliation ? He walked on, thinking of it and wondering, and when he reached home was surprised that the uncertainty gave him so little anxiety ; that he was able to think so quietly of her and her feeling for him.

The two girls were together some time that evening, and Lizzie was unusually silent, leaving Lucy to do the greater part of the talking. She was thinking of the look she had seen on Lucy's face the evening of the party at her house, when George had asked her a second time to marry him. She knew what that look meant, and wondered if the feeling which produced it was still there. She decided that she must watch Lucy and find out how she felt.

She did not have long to wait, for after tea George came in to make a call. He was in the habit of spending an evening or two every week at the Elliots', and had chosen to make a call this evening, while both girls were there. The look of welcome with which Lucy greeted him was sufficient to convince Lizzie that she entertained the same feeling for him that she had two years before.

In a short time Dick came in. He was also in the habit of spending an occasional evening with Miss Elliot, who was very kind to him, and made him feel very much at home in her father's house, and very much at ease with himself. He did not know that Lizzie was there ; if he had he would only have made a little more haste to have gotten

there. His feelings, also, had not changed in the two years which had passed.

Lizzie did not know him for a moment after he entered. Of course she had heard from her uncle of the changes which time had brought to him as regarded his money and business prospects, and her uncle had not been faint in his praise of Dick's business ability in general, or his special ability as shown by the way in which he had brought the mill out of its difficulties. All this she had heard several times since her return, but for all that she was not prepared for the change which had occurred in the young man's personal appearance. She saw a young man of fine presence; one who knew how to carry himself; a young man with a serious face and a self-contained air which would have made him noticeable anywhere. He was in no particular inferior in personal appearance or attraction to his partner, George Moore; in fact, was rather a handsomer man. Lizzie was surprized. Dick had always been an attractive, pleasant companion; but here was a man of the world, finished as to his appearance. How could so short a time have made so great a difference? She did not understand it. Before the evening was over, however, she accepted it as a pleasant fact. She no longer questioned. The evening passed pleasantly to them all. Lucy had felt some fear as to what effect Lizzie's presence would have on George Moore. She could not forget the look in his face as he had stood in the window talking to Lizzie and she watched for its re-appearance. But she saw nothing of the kind. Lizzie was perfectly quiet in her conversation with him, and he accepted her manner as his standard in talking to her. So Lucy felt somewhat less anxious, and was her own bright, vivacious self.

When Lizzie was ready to go home, Dick very quietly asked to accompany her. George had decided to do the same thing, but found that he had been too late. He had had no idea of reckoning in Dick at all.

CHAPTER XXV.

During the year which followed Lizzie's return, Dick saw much of her. He had always been a frequent visitor at the Webb's, and his successes had not made him forget old friends, so before Lizzie was again an inmate of the house he was often there. Her presence only served to draw him there more frequently. Dick had never disguised the fact from himself that he loved Lizzie Gardner. From the first his one idea had been to make himself more worthy of her, to place himself in a position in which he could ask her to be his wife, to be able to offer her a home which was in some degree worthy of her. Like any man who is truly in love with a good girl, he did not think that he was or would ever be worthy of her. He only tried to approach more nearly

his ideal of her husband. That he could offer a pleasant home he felt assured. Thus far he had succeeded in his ambition, but as for himself, he still felt that he was not worthy to be what he desired towards her. Dick had little self-conceit, and as regarded his position towards Lizzie there was absolutely none. He showed his love for her very plainly whenever he was with her. She could do nothing which escaped his notice. His every look betrayed his feelings, and every one understood that Dick Herrick was a lover of Lizzie's.

There had been no word spoken of love between the two. At first Dick had been too distrustful of himself, and too uncertain of Lizzie's feelings for him, to say anything which approached love, and latterly there had been no need of speech; he understood his position and Lizzie's feelings without the necessity of explanation.

When Lizzie first returned to Mr. Webb's she had been rather anxious to go back to New York, as she felt more at home there. Her Parisian dresses did not harmonize with the homeliness and plainness of her aunt's house, and the luxury and refinement of which her pretty clothing was the sign, seemed to be an inseparable part of her nature. But as the days passed she ceased to think of the barrenness of her surroundings; there was something else which took their place, and left her no time to notice it; her mind was full of other things. She did not fully realize this; but she knew she was happy, that her life in M—— was satisfying, and that she craved nothing else. She had not stopped to think that a walk or a drive with Dick was enough to fill her thoughts for a whole day; that a glance of his eyes, or the pressure of his hand, as he said good evening, was enough to make her happy for hours. She did not realize this either at first or afterwards; her love for him grew with her, and she never knew when she first realized it. It was a part of her before she realized it.

The sympathy between the two was complete; they needed no word to tell of their love. Each recognized it, though there had been no sign of its existence given by either beyond what was given through the eyes. Dick was waiting until he felt that Lizzie was ready for him to speak. He knew that she would rather their relations remain those of friends for the present, and he respected her wishes too much to say anything which would alter them.

George Moore realized the relation between Lizzie and Dick perhaps sooner than any one. He saw Dick quietly assume the right to take Lizzie to and from the choir meeting on Saturday evening. He watched him as he took a place at her side whenever they spent an evening at the same house, and realized that Dick was gaining what he had sought in vain. This knowledge came to George gradually and naturally. The poorly defined and utterly forlorn hope which he had in his mind when Lizzie first returned to the village, died so naturally

that George forgot that it had existed at that particular time, and only remembered that he had tried to win Lizzie a couple of years before. Still he did not think of her as he did of other women of his acquaintance. He had a tender feeling for her, a feeling of sentiment which was very natural towards a woman whom he had once loved, and who had treated that love so kindly and tenderly.

It was a natural thing for George to turn to Lucy at this time as he had done once before. In fact, the companionship between them had never ceased. She had always been his friend, he thought. He had not realized that he had been more to her than a friend, that her one hope of happiness centered in him. Perhaps it was well that he did not. The slight touch of uncertainty was a good thing for Lucy's happiness. Lucy had felt more certain of reaching this happiness since Lizzie's return. She saw nothing to make her distrustful; Dick was certainly in love with Lizzie, and George showed no sign of having ever cared for her. Perhaps she was mistaken in supposing that he had ever done so. What was there to indicate it but the one look she had seen him give Lizzie in the window? and might she not be mistaken in that look? If he had loved Lizzie why did he not show it now? Lizzie was free; Lucy knew, at least, that she had given Dick no encouragement by word. This was the way in which Lucy reasoned, and she got much encouragement from it. One evening when George asked her to be his wife she thought that her fears were at rest forever; that she was perfectly happy. Her love for George was strong, and had fed itself on such uncertain food as not to be exacting. George was not a very ardent lover, but he was remiss; he was with her all his spare time, and attentive to her wishes in every respect. It was not this. It was that there seemed to be some depth which Lucy did not reach, some want in his nature which she did not fill. They neither of them realized this. They only dimly felt it, and this made a slight barrier between them. Perhaps, of the two, George felt this distance between them the more acutely. Lucy was more satisfied, for the mere fact that she loved him was almost enough for her; she required very little return to complete the measure of her happiness. This is a common experience, that the one who loves most is the happiest—requires less sympathy to complete the inward life. George felt the want of a complete companionship, yet he was not an unhappy man. Lucy deferred her every wish to him; she lived in his wants, and in the fulfilling of them. The truest happiness comes when the giving up of one's individual wishes, the submission of one's self, is shared alike by both—when a middle course is found in which both are satisfied. This is the result of a complete sympathy between a man and a woman.

Lizzie felt very happy in the knowledge of the engagement of

George and Lucy. She had a sincere love for her friend, and had instinctively felt from the first that Lucy's happiness depended upon George. When she found that this happiness was secure she rejoiced with her friend. Then, again, she was glad that George had found some one to take the place which she could not fill.

Only a few months elapsed before the two were married. George desired that their home should be established as soon as possible. His surroundings in his father's house had never been very congenial, and since his father's failure and his own success the situation there had not improved. Mrs. Moore was growing decidedly unpleasant, openly so, since she had not her customary surroundings, and the fact of George's success, coupled with that of his father's lack of it, did not serve to increase her amiability towards the former. This made George doubly anxious to have his own home as soon as possible, and Lucy was not averse to having him more fully her own.

Their home was a present from Judge Elliot. It was a beautiful one—a fit setting to Lucy's brilliant beauty and charming manners. And it was essentially her's. George seemed a trifle too quiet for it. When their friends left it they felt, perhaps unconsciously, that she made the home, not the two together.

George enjoyed his new life very much, and was always at home evenings. He enjoyed his wife's beauty and ability, and the comforts of being under his own roof. A man never seems to have a rightful place until he is married and makes a home for himself and his wife.

Lizzie and Dick had been prominent figures in the brilliant wedding ceremony of their friends. They were both very happy. During the evening, when most of the guests had left the house of Judge Elliot, they found themselves alone for a short time in an alcove. They had been talking about the wedding and the happiness of their friends, and about the new home, when their own personal relation to a possible new home came to them both, and made them silent for a time. Finally Dick spoke, very quietly and in a natural, every day manner.

"Lizzie, when are we to have our home? It all rests with you. The sooner we have it the happier we will be. My life is a little lonesome now."

Lizzie waited a moment, looking down. Then she looked into Dick's eyes and said:

"I would rather wait a little time, Dick. I don't want to be selfish, don't want to keep you from a home or anything which will add to your comfort, but I believe we will be happier if we wait a little longer, and get a little more used to each other's wants. I think it best for us both."

"Maybe it is, Lizzie. I must leave it to you. Only whenever it

is best, whenever you think it right, I am ready to make you as happy a home as I am able. I believe—yes, I am sure, that I can make you happy.”

This was all that was said. They understood each other perfectly.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Moore & Co.'s mill made money after it had once started on the right road. It was a monotonous success from a story-telling standpoint. One day was a good deal like another. The flour was sold continuously at a fair profit, but there was a good deal of money to be made. In their struggle to get their mill righted they had spent a good deal of money, and their bank debt, which was always quite large, hung over them, and was particularly weighty during that depressing time in their business history when they were making such poor flour at so high a cost. There was then no profit in manufacturing and there had been a constant outlay for machinery and experiments in the effort to recuperate. The success turned the tide. It meant the paying of the debt, and as they saw it fading away, they saw an accumulation which it was comfortable to anticipate.

As the debt grew less they began to talk about additions to the plant, which meant increase of capacity, and after they had been running something over a year on the new plan, they figured on additions which they estimated would cost about four thousand dollars. They had all but contracted for the machinery to make the change, when an event, as unexpected as it was startling, changed all of their plans in respect to an increase of capacity. The question was not as to an increase, as it eventually turned out, but one which related to their being able to do anything.

It had been raining hard for several days, but no one thought of the connection which it might have with the business history of this mill. Dick was in Chicago at the time, and George Moore was awakened one morning, before daylight, to be told that there was no water in the race. It did not take very long to reach the conclusion that the dam had been washed out. The idea was confusing for a time, and then it was thought it might possibly be only a short break which a little time and a small expense would remedy. Morning would tell, and as the sun began to rise it illuminated a good deal of trouble. They could see fragments of the broken dam floating down the stream. George Moore telegraphed to Dick. As he sat in the mill waiting for him, and watching the fragments of the dam on their way down stream, he made calculations in his own way as to the cost of repairing the dam, and as time advanced the estimated cost could not but grow larger. By night nothing but fragments of the abutment were

left. In the evening Dick Herrick had arrived, and he was told what had happened.

"Well, I don't know what it will cost to replace the dam, but I believe it will cost more than we've got to put into it."

That was the most definite form of an idea that was approached that evening. On the morning of the following day some figures were made by a contractor who would undertake to replace the dam, and in conclusion Dick Herrick summed up the situation in this way :

"We can put in a dam for about \$15,000 which will probably last while we are putting it in, and perhaps several years besides; that depends on the water; but I don't care to risk my money on that kind of a dam. We can build a dam which will probably be permanent at a cost of about \$15,000, but then, again, the supply of water may not be permanent. You know that some of the best water powers in this country have had to be abandoned for want of a supply."

"Well, what are you going to do? We haven't any money to build a \$15,000 dam?"

"Let's go outside a minute," said Dick. When they were out of the office he continued, "There is just one thing to do, and that is to put in an engine."

"And throw away the water power?" asked Moore.

"We can never throw away anything less than it is just now. We have no money to make a water power."

"I guess you're right."

The next thing was to figure on an engine. They got one for about six thousand dollars, besides the loss of time; but the mill moved off all right after this, and they figured and realized a profit on every barrel of flour they sold. But here, again, was the engine debt, added to the one not yet wiped out, which they had been carrying before. They had begun to feel comfortable enough before the dam went out to talk about spending four or five thousand dollars in the mill towards an increase of capacity. They had to spend the six thousand dollars for the engine, and had to stand the loss of time without the addition. But in time even this debt began to fade away. The mill was operated carefully and on a close yield. They had a good home trade; they sold flour to arrive in New York, and had a little trade in Boston, and some points in New England. When this trade was dull in the winter they had the South as a market.

One day Moore and Dick were sitting in the office talking over indifferent matters, when Dick turned the conversation in this way :

"Moore, did you ever hear anything about that experimental roller mill that they're building in Minneapolis, or are going to build, or something of that kind?"

"Roller mill? What do you mean?"

"Well, I don't believe I know; but there seems to be some kind of talk about building a mill up there, and I believe that they are thinking about using rolls instead of burrs for grinding wheat."

"Oh, no, I guess not," says Moore.

"Well, I don't know. I was reading about it in a milling paper, and they don't seem to know much more about it than somebody else who don't know anything, excepting that they're building some kind of an experimental mill and are going to do most of the work with rolls."

"Oh, those fellows up there are always tinkering at something. I guess there's nothing in it."

After a time they heard that the experimental mill had started, in the meantime having read a good many generalities in regard to it but nothing to convey an idea of what was to be done. Neither Moore nor Herrick took much interest in it, still it was a novelty and something to be talked about. There was not enough specific information to excite curiosity, and then, people do not look upon experiments of this kind with the same interest that we would imagine would be the case when looking at it in after years. When we think of this experimental mill, which was the beginning of the reduction revolution in America, we wonder that we did not take more interest in it, but merely regarded it as of very little importance.

"George, I learn that the experimental mill has started, and is a failure."

"I guess that's no more than people expected. What did you learn about it?"

"Well, I heard that Governor Washburn was in Milwaukee making negotiations for millstones for the new mill that he's going to build. I guess that is conclusive enough. He said so himself. He was at the Plankinton House in Milwaukee, and a reporter went there to talk politics to him, and to find out what he was after, and he said he had come there to buy millstones for his new mill."

That was all that was said about it at this time. It was only a few weeks after this until the subject came up again. After all there was much in this mill which attracted attention, and especially so for a mill which was pronounced a failure, and its failure was regarded as a settled fact. Said Dick:

"I saw Carpenter last night. He had been over to Dayton, Ohio, and he said that they were making a hundred pair of rolls or roller machines over there. I asked him who they were making them for, and he said that it was a secret; that they took him out in the shop and showed him the frames and some of the rolls, and he said that the rolls were fluted."

"That's strange. What else did he say?"

"Well, he talked a good deal about it; but said that over there in the shop they showed the rolls and frames to everybody, and seemed to think that it was a big thing; said that somebody was going to build a roller mill and use the fluted rolls instead of the burrs, and that they were going to make a thousand barrels of flour a day. But they didn't give any names, he said. It was a part of the contract not to tell who they were for or to say anything about it."

"Somebody's crazy, I guess. Don't think Carpenter could have been lying, do you?"

"Well, I hadn't thought of that. Jim is a little windy, you know."

But Jim was not lying.

The rolls turned up in the Washburn mill in Minneapolis, and to many their destination was an open secret sometime before their shipment.

Winter-wheat millers, as a class, did not recognize the full significance of the roller change. In the Northwest the impulse of the change from burrs was a desire to improve their milling; in the winter wheat section the impulse was from force—it was the result of Northwestern competition. In this respect the changes from the old to the new process, and from the new process to gradual reduction were identical.

This was the inauguration of the change to the system of gradual reduction milling.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The short history of milling in the Northwest is something like this: During the time when the hard spring wheat was ground into flour under the old process method, the value of the flour product was much less than that from the wheat of the winter wheat region. The wheat of the latter section was softer and had a tougher bran than did that of the Northwest, and by the ordinary low grinding millstone method would produce a flour much whiter than the same methods when applied to the hard, flinty wheat of the Northwest. Then again, the winter wheat millers had their white wheat which they could mix in with the other wheat to give color to the flour. The color which it gave was largely owing to the absence of color in the bran which, in the nature of the process, would be more or less mixed with the flour. St. Louis flour was then at its height. All kinds of flour which were made out of winter wheat went to New York branded as St. Louis flour. Thus the spring wheat millers were at a disadvantage with their hard brittle wheat. It was the disposition of the millers of that section to do what they might to alter this condition of things. They were on the lookout for anything which would help them. The winter wheat millers were not in need of improved methods at this time.

Their flour was well received and it was popular. It was the millers who made the unpopular flour who found it necessary to make the effort to get up. Thus we had conditions favorable to improvement in the Northwest, and conditions which did not favor improvement in the winter wheat section. As a result of this we had the development of the middlings idea in the spring wheat region. It was an adaptation to foreign methods, but nevertheless it was something which would not have come about at the time it did excepting for the conditions of which we speak. In the practical working out of the middlings idea, we find the spring wheat flour supreme in the market, and we find the winter wheat millers moving along as followers in the new process production of middlings by burrs. The limit of the possibilities of such a process was apparently reached with such machines. It then followed to look for something which would produce a larger proportion of middlings, and hence a larger percentage of patent flour. As a result of this search the experimental roller mill was built; however, it need not have been called experimental, as the system of gradual reduction had been firmly established in Hungarian mills some years previous to its introduction in this country. As a phenomenal success in the production of middlings by rolls, it follows that the introduction of this process and the sale of the machines was a phenomenal success.

After the completion of the experimental mill and the work of constructing the larger roller mill in Minneapolis, there was quite a dearth of information in regard to the process in the winter wheat section. The interest at first was largely that of curiosity, rather than a genuine business or commercial interest. Like all other great changes which are in prospect, the majority of people interested in them have little confidence in the outcome of the scheme. There is always a tendency to decry that which is new or radical. The roller idea was sufficiently radical to most of the millers of the country to be regarded as something which could not succeed.

It was not long after this until there walked into the office of Moore & Co. a young man with a model of a roller mill and some little boxes of samples. One of the boxes contained clean bran, and another one bran flour, and still another some middlings which had been scraped from the bran and purified. Moore's attention was first called to the display, and then Dick and the miller were called in, and they all gathered around and looked at the rolls and asked a good many questions about them, as none of them had heard especially of rolls as bran cleaning devices. The salesman was one of those quiet, effective talkers who did not speak of his machine as being a novelty, but mentioned a large number of mills in the Northwest which were cleaning their bran by rolls, and spoke of a number of others that were

putting them in. He did it in a matter-of-course kind of a way, which was inclined to make a miller who did not have rolls feel lonesome.

"Has Grape & Co's mill got these rolls?" the miller asked.

"Oh, yes. He's got half a dozen machines, and he's going to put in two more. I'm going up there to get the order to-morrow. Just come from Green & Co's mill. They're going to put in a pair to clean their bran."

"Selling a good many of these rolls, aren't you?" said Moore.

"Yes. Sold about fifty pair on this trip. Looking for the house to call me in. Got more in that line than we can do."

"Well, I'll confess," said Dick, "that I never heard of cleaning bran on rolls."

"Why, that's strange. Nearly everybody is using them—putting them in as fast as they can get them. We've shipped a good many rolls up to Minneapolis by express; freight too slow, you know."

"What are these machines worth?" asked Dick.

"Six hundred dollars a machine."

"Whew!"

"Yes, they come pretty high, but they're very expensive to make and get them just right."

The price made Dick critical as to the process of cleaning bran by rolls. He looked at the feed again, and the flour. The flour looked all right and the feed clean.

"Is this all the feed you make?" he asked of the young man.

"Well, no, there's some feed that's made at the same time. I didn't bring any of that."

"Well, that's just the stuff I'd like to see," said Dick, and he called the miller. "Now here are the marks on the bran made by the grooves in the rolls; you see how they go by looking at the machine here. Now I'll tell you what I'm afraid of; I'm afraid that these grooves, these cuts, will break lots of the bran into pieces just the width of the cut and knock out lots of lumps that it don't clean at all. I'll bet there is lots of small lumpy bran made by these machines, and while it may clean the bran which it don't break clean enough, there's lots of bran it just cuts up and don't clean at all."

"I'm not a miller," said the young man who was representing the rolls, "but there are a great many millers who are using them, and everybody who uses them is satisfied with them, and they say that they get cleaner bran and better flour by them than by any other way. How much flour does your mill make?"

They told him.

"You'll need three double machines. We could furnish them to you in about a month."

"Well, we'll not order them now," said Moore, laughing at his assurance.

"Oh, that's all right," he said, "just order them whenever you get ready. I'd like to see you put them in, though, right soon, before everybody else gets them around here. But whenever you want them just let us know," and he put up his samples, took a little walk into the mill and departed.

The quiet, self-possessed manner of this young man made this much impression upon those interested in this mill: it merely led them to look into the system of cleaning bran by rolls. They made inquiries of millers who came their way, though few of them knew anything about it excepting mere heresay, and because of the meagreness of their knowledge they were suspicious; yet there were one or two others who knew the method to be a success. Green & Co. put in a pair of rolls, and another miller in the near vicinity put in two pairs, and the novelty of cleaning bran in this way and the result led them to talk about it quite a little, and it was demonstrated to Moore & Co. that it was a success; that there was so great a difference in the quality of the flour produced, as well as in the cleanness of the bran, that they felt it desirable to take steps in the direction of cleaning their feed in this way. With that in view they had another call from an agent of the house represented by the young man mentioned. He had practical experience in milling; he was a mill builder and a millwright. He told them how it was that they could grind a little higher, make more middlings in that way, and then, by making two reductions on the bran rolls they could get some nice middlings for the first reduction, which they could send in with the other stock to be purified. He mentioned a number of mills where this thing was being done.

"Do they send these middlings right into the dusting reel with the other stock?"

"Oh, yes. They do that a good deal, but the best way is to run the middlings into a purifier by themselves, and then send the clean middlings from this machine into the other purifiers."

"Then we should have to buy another purifier?" said Moore.

"Yes, you ought to have another purifier."

"Well, what do we need in the way of separating machinery?"

"Well, you want a couple of short scalpers, two flour reels and a short dusting reel for the bran middlings."

"Let's see," said Dick, "there's eighteen hundred dollars for the rolls, three hundred and fifty dollars for the three scalpers and the duster, which makes twenty-one hundred and fifty dollars, and two reels which must be clothed, which would make about twenty-six hundred dollars; then there are some elevators and conveyors and spouting."

“There’s the purifier you haven’t counted,” said Moore.

“Yes, that’s so. Well, its going to cost us four thousand dollars to get out of this if we go into it. Four thousand dollars for bran cleaning machinery; that looks pretty steep.”

Then the agent mentioned again the number of people who were putting in these machines and developing improvements in their yields as well as in the quality and quantity of their flour, and altogether made them feel a little lonesome again.

The four thousand dollar figure scared them. They figured it over again and figured it less; but then they knew of the incidentals which must come, and they were scared again. However, it was not long until they felt impelled to order the machines.

The cleaning of the bran by rolls in the new process mills of the winter wheat section was the initatory step towards the process of gradual reduction in the mills of this section. It was the use of rolls for cleaning bran which led to their farther use for reducing wheat. This was the entering wedge for their general introduction, and because of the importance of this fact in the history of gradual reduction milling in the winter wheat section, it will be instructive and entertaining to cite, as a typical instance, the manner in which the use of the bran rolls led to the full gradual reduction process in Moore & Co’s mill.

It was quite six weeks from the time the rolls were ordered until they were received. The sale of rolls was larger than the facilities for their manufacture. There was a great deal of impatience displayed in Moore & Co.’s mill because of this delay, but in the meantime the scalping reels were purchased and set up, as was a dusting reel for the bran middlings, and a couple of reels for the bolting of the bran flour. The purifier was placed directly under the dusting reel, while the rolls were arranged for on the grinding floor. Two extra elevators were required, and about seventy-five feet of conveyors in three distinct sections.

It was argued by Dick that the bran cleaning and separating machinery should be distinct from that of any other part of the mill, that the separation of material should be as distinct as if the reels were located in another building. “Thus,” he said, “if there is any benefit in the use of rolls we shall see where it comes in.”

The programme of reductions and separations was something like this: There was, as we know, three four-roller machines, that is, six pairs of rolls, and there were to be two reductions on the bran after it left the millstones, which allowed the use of three pairs of eighteen-inch rolls (for such they were), on each reduction. Then there was an independent scalper for each reduction, the first one being clothed with No. 28 wire and the second with No. 36. The product of the first

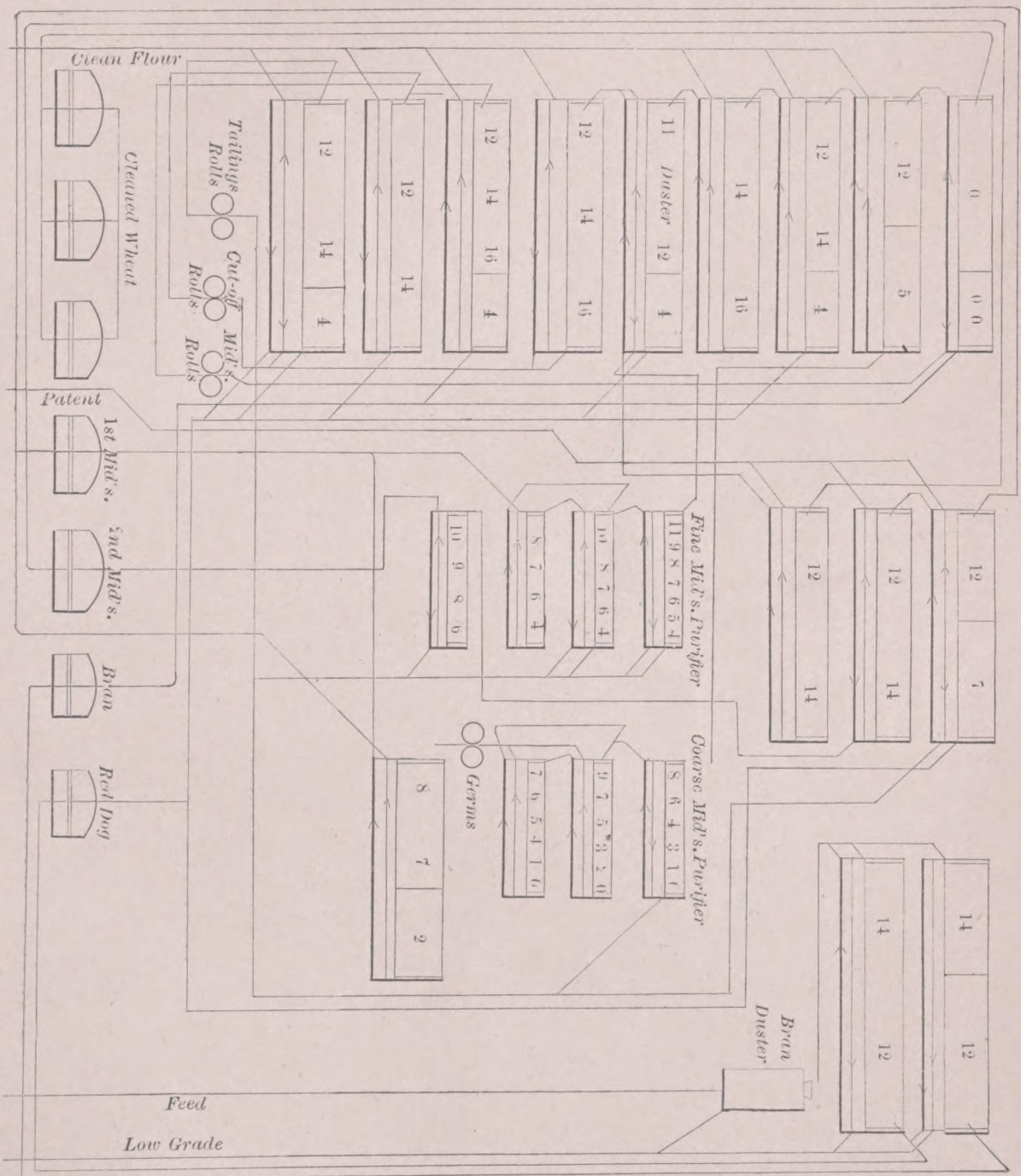


DIAGRAM OF MOORE & CO'S MILL AFTER THE CHANGE.

scalper went into the duster, or, as it might properly be called, a middlings scalper, which was clothed with Nos. 7 and 8 cloth. The product of this duster went to the first flour reel, and the tail went to the bran middlings purifier. The flour of this reduction was bolted through Nos. 12 and 14 cloth. There was a No. 4 tail cloth at the end, the product of which went to the tailings rolls and the tail to the red-dog. The flour cut-off from the first bran flour reel went into the second bran flour reel, which was clothed with No. 14 cloth with a piece of No. 3 at the tail. This tailings went to the feed, and the product of No. 3, together with the cut-off from the flour cloth, went to the red-dog.

The purifier was arranged so that the product of the upper conveyor could be run in with first middlings, and the product of the lower conveyor to a pair of smooth rolls which handled the dusting stock, or to the tailing rolls, as might be desired.

It was agreed that when the mill started up they would grind a little higher, and so they did. The mill had been running some hours, Dick having devoted his attention to the operation of the rolls, when he was attracted to the condition of the clear flour.

"It looks very specky," said the miller, "and I can't bring it up. I'm not using more than half of the cloth that I did before we shut down, and its nearly all on the lower reel. The flour from the head of the first reel is specky—worse than I ever saw it."

Here was an unexpected trouble. The last place that they would look for annoyance was in that part of the mill which had given them no trouble before, and which had no connection with the bran rolls or the bran separation. They agreed to cut off some more cloth, thinking that when the mill got warmed up it might look better, and devoted their attention to the bran roll.

The feed was cleaned out all right, the bran flour looked quite as well as they could have hoped for, but the middlings were not middlings at all in the sense that they had expected. Dick found that he would be able to run a small portion in with his better roll stock, but none to his first middlings; that by far the larger bulk would go in with the tailings, and that the tail of the purifier was suited only for red-dog. Yet there was something in the character of the reduction which emphasized the fact that the roller method was in every way superior to the millstones. It carried with it the suggestion that they should be used for the other reductions on the wheat, and this was a part of the calculation of everyone who observed intelligently their use for bran cleaning purposes.

But to return to the other trouble to which we alluded—that is, with the clean flour. It was the next day before a proper solution was reached. It was decided that it was hardly possible to get a good grade

of middlings from the bran, for which reason there was no cause for grinding especially high on the wheat. They lowered the burrs so that they were grinding only a little higher than before the bran rolls were put in. It was after so doing that they noticed that the clear flour came up all right; that they had to lengthen out the reels to nearly their original condition. Then it was that the miller, Webb, announced that the clear flour had been run down on account of the high grinding, and that if they had continued in that way they would have had to use a finer cloth on the tail of the first middlings scalper. This was a new principle to Dick, and one which he fully recognized the force of, and afterwards used to great advantage in the elaboration of his milling processes.

While it was not recognized that the use of the bran rolls was a part of a gradual reduction process in the production of middlings which could be purified for patent flour, it was recognized that by the use of such rolls the winter wheat must eventually be reduced.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Lizzie wrote to her aunt, Miss Southwick, telling her of her engagement. She wrote a very quiet letter, saying little beyond the mere fact. She knew well enough that the news would not be welcome to her Eastern relatives; Dick did not have money enough to make a welcome addition to the family. Lizzie received no answer to her letter. In the course of two or three weeks one of her cousins wrote to say that Miss Southwick had been very ill, so ill that at one time it was considered impossible for her to live.

Lizzie immediately wrote again. This time she offered to go to Brooklyn to help in the care of her aunt. In a few days a short answer came from Miss Southwick. She wrote that she was too weak to say what she wished, but that there was no need of Lizzie taking so long a trip as it would be to New York; that she was improving every day and would write more fully when able.

Lizzie was somewhat surprised at the reception of her offer. She had realized that her engagement would be an unpleasant surprise to her aunt, but she had no reason for thinking that, after the kindness and love which had been hers, she would be treated so summarily as Miss Southwick's letter indicated. Lizzie waited with some impatience for another letter from her aunt, and in two or three weeks it came. It was as follows:

MY DEAR NIECE:

There is no need of expressing the surprise I felt in the news your recent letter brought to me. I had supposed that you had seen the error of your mother's marriage, and would avoid making a like mistake. That any one with the advantages which may be yours by simply ac-

cepting them should bury herself in a little hole like M——, and marry a man who has neither advantages nor fortune to recommend him is astonishing. There is no way in which I can express the surprise and pain I feel that you should commit such a mistake.

Now I cannot think that you have thoroughly considered what you are doing. A mistake of this kind is easily remedied now, while later it is more difficult. My suggestion is that you come to me, and ask Mr. Herrick to release you from your engagement. I can make you happy here. I did before and I can again. Now, Lizzie, I want you to thoroughly consider this.

I have made my will, fearing that I may not live much longer. It gives to you the bulk of my fortune should you marry a man of established position; should you marry otherwise, you get nothing. I can see no reason for disposing of my money in a way that would not naturally benefit you. I hope you will be wise enough to divest this matter of all sentiment.

Your aunt,

MARY A. SOUTHWICK.

Lizzie put this letter away and said nothing to Dick about it. After a short time she answered it, thanking her aunt for her offer of a home, and saying she could not accept it; that she was determined to marry Richard Herrick. She said that her husband would be amply able to give her a comfortable home, and that her happiness lay in marrying as she had intended.

Miss Southwick waited again a few weeks. She did not answer Lizzie's letter, but she did write to Dick. Her letter to him was characteristic. She pointed out to him that Lizzie would be much happier if she had a luxurious home; that money was a softener of human existence, and that Lizzie's way of attaining this happiness was through a reasonable compliance with Miss Southwick's wishes. She asked Richard to release Lizzie from this engagement; that a young girl would naturally dislike to approach such a subject.

Dick did not know what to do with the letter. He carried it around in his pocket for a couple of days before he showed it to Lizzie. Finally he concluded she ought to see it, and so said to her, as they were talking together one evening:

"I had a letter from the East the other day, Lizzie."

Lizzie smiled a curious little smile, and said: "Is there anything peculiar in getting a letter, Dick?"

"Well, no, there is nothing peculiar in receiving letters in general, but this particular letter was very peculiar indeed."

Lizzie held out her hand.

"I guess you had better let me see that letter, Dick."

"Yes; I think you had better see it," and he took it out of his pocket and handed it to her.

Lizzie recognized the hand-writing, and was not greatly surprised—nor was she surprised at the contents of the letter. She knew too

well Miss Southwick's determination. She read it quietly, folded it up, put it in the envelope and laid it in her lap. Then she said :

"I am sorry, Dick, that you should be annoyed in this way."

"Dick took both her hands in his and said :

"Don't think of it, my little girl. It was not for this that I showed you the letter. I thought you ought to see it. I have known all the time that you were not doing yourself justice in marrying me. I am not and never will be worthy of you. No one could be, but you might find some one more so. What I want you to do is to consider yourself in this matter. Do the best thing for yourself, and I will be content, whatever it is."

"Dick, did you know that the Johnston cottage was to be vacated next month ? The Johnstons have bought a larger house and will move then ?"

"No," wonderingly. "No, I hadn't heard of it."

Lizzie looked down.

"I think, Dick, that it is about the size you and I will want, and I guess we had better get ready to move into it when the Johnstons move out. You go and see Mr. Johnston to-morrow."

Dick held her in his arms a minute very closely. Then she looked up and said ;

"Give me this letter, Dick. You need not answer it. I have one from my aunt which I think needs a further answer than I gave it, and I will answer this at the same time."

Dick and Lizzie were married in four weeks. They went directly into their little home. Lizzie said they could be just as happy there as if they had taken a wedding trip, and that it was better that Dick should save his money for his business. This was the keynote of her life—Dick and Dick's interest. She has always known all of his business troubles and cares, and all of the pleasures which attend a business man's career. She has lightened the burdens and intensified the pleasures through her intelligent appreciation of them and her sympathy with her husband. They are essentially one. All Dick's strong points are developed through her and his weaknesses hidden and erased. She is a typical wife. Her husband's love and appreciation make her life one which is unclouded. They have two bright, interesting children to whom both father and mother are devoted, and who show the care which is bestowed upon them.

Last year they and the boy went to New York, and while there Lizzie called on her relatives. Her reception was kindly, but lacked the cordiality from her aunt which might have been hers had she married more as the elderly lady thought fitting. One evening Lizzie asked Dick to go over to Brooklyn to see her aunt. She said that she was old and ought to be treated considerately, and that besides she

wanted her to see what Dick was. So they went over, and the old lady scrutinized Dick closely, watching him the whole evening, and when they were leaving she said to Lizzie, when Dick was not in hearing distance :

“ Your husband is not bad after all, my dear. I guess you are a happy woman—and your little boy is a fine fellow.”

Lizzie took this as high praise of them both, and was satisfied that her relatives knew that she had a husband who was their equal in every particular.

Lucy and George have no children, and in this respect miss much of the happiness which might be theirs. Lucy is still a brilliant, beautiful woman, and devoted to her husband, but George spends much time planning and thinking of his business which might be given to his home, and while not distinctly conscious of it, misses something from his life which he might have had had circumstances been different. He has about forgotten that he ever asked Lizzie to be his wife, but he never forgets the glimpses he has of the home of Dick and Lizzie as he has seen them with their children around them. This home is his ideal.

Mr. and Mrs. Webb are much with Lizzie. They are the same kindly people, and their one interest is in Lizzie and her children.

The elder Mr. and Mrs. Moore have a comfortable home, but look back to the days of their prosperity with never-ceasing regret, and the farther they leave them in the past the brighter they look.

As for Miss Southwick, she is still alive and likely to live a good many years. Whether she will leave her money to Lizzie after all, or to some one else, she alone knows. Lizzie and Dick never give it a thought.

CHAPTER XXIX.

In the spring wheat country the introduction of the gradual reduction process was brought about by direct means, in the main. In the winter wheat country it came about in another way. We have seen how the bran rolls came to Moore & Co.'s mill. While they did not do all that was expected of them in a way to admit of higher grinding by the burrs, and the production of middlings by the bran rolls, which could be worked into patent, it was apparent to all alike as soon as they had started that it was the proper means of reducing wheat. All had known that these rolls were only a part of a process as used in a gradual reduction mill, and must have understood, if they did not express it, that the use of these machines to clean bran from millstones was only a make-shift. In truth, it was presented to them as one of the arguments for putting in the bran rolls, that they would be a part of the machinery which could be used in carrying out the

full gradual reduction system. It was apparent to those in Moore & Co.'s mill that machines which would make so good a flour from the bran as did these bran rolls would do relatively better when the millstones were not used at all as a part of the wheat reduction process.

This course of reasoning went on in a good many mills. The introduction of the bran rolls was an entering wedge of the roller system in a large number of mills in the winter wheat section. It amounted to putting in the last breaks first, but the effect was the introduction of the other breaks soon after, which resulted in discarding the millstones in the reduction of the wheat. Every one was prepared for the change. It was expected, and anything which was in the nature of gradual reduction, and anything which admitted of the less rapid introduction of gradual reduction machinery than the putting of it all in at once—as did the first introduction of the bran rolls—was readily accepted by many millers. None could hope that it would be a permanent arrangement, but it was not so hasty nor so revolutionary in its character as the introduction of the full system at once. Then there was a great deal of talk about rolls not being the thing for soft wheat, and that the system had no place outside the spring wheat country, which made many of the millers a little careful and inclined to go as slowly as possible; but the pressure was soon felt. Those who were engaged in general merchant milling, who were selling flour in the large markets, had no other choice than to accept the gradual reduction system.

Moore & Co. were representative, in their way, of the effect of this pressure. They were not the first to put in the roller process in their immediate section; they had always been just a little behind in the introduction of these new features of milling, for which reason they always felt the direct outside pressure leading to such changes. Their course was not an unwise one. The fact that the pressure was apparent was a certificate of the value of the process which they had to adopt. They heard reports from New York of the value of certain kinds of flour made by some of their enterprising neighbors which were surprising to them, and it was not long until they felt the necessity for the introduction of the same machinery. Many of the traveling salesmen in different establishments called upon them, knowing, as they did, that they would soon have to make a purchase of roller machinery. Herrick and Moore talked to them all without giving them much encouragement as to the time of the expected change. One of the salesmen said to them, as he leaned back in his chair in the office:

“I'll tell you how it is, gentlemen, this roller system is a good deal simpler thing than you think it is. There isn't much to it. We can fit you out mighty cheap and you won't have to lose over two weeks' time. Your bolting is all right; you've got your bran rolls in, and

you are bolting that stuff all right. Now all you've got to do is to take the bolts and elevators and all and just let them alone. You don't need to make any changes, except to put a little coarser cloths on your purifiers and spout the stock from the breaks right into the chop elevator and start your mill to going, and she'll run the same as ever she did. So really all you have to do is to set the rolls on the grinding floor and set them going and practically let the rest of the mill alone."

Another one, who was there a few days later, said :

"The roller system of milling is not fully understood by all who are engaged in the business of building mills. There is not one product from a roller mill which compares with that from a burr mill in a way to invite the same handling of the stock. I could arrange your mill in a very simple and inexpensive manner, and for the time being you would be satisfied with it, but while you are making this change I trust you will make it right—make it complete, so that you will not have to be patching on to it at all times, so that your flour will take a front rank in the market at once."

"Will we have to make many changes in the bolting?" asked Moore. "Will not the present system of bolting do if we put in the rolls and scalping reels?"

"I would not do it in that way," said the mill-builder. "What I would prefer to do would be to make a list of your reels and purifiers, and make a diagram of the reductions and separations which is particularly suited to your mill and the conditions of gradual reduction milling. As I said, there is not one product of a roller mill which will correspond with those of a burr mill in a manner to invite the same handling by the reels and purifiers. Such a system, which is complete at the outset, will save you from future changes."

"That's all well enough," said Moore, "but such a system would take more money than we have got to put into the mill. Whoever builds our mill will have to take some of our paper anyhow, and if we were to adopt your plan it is possible that more of our paper would have to be used than you would feel inclined to take."

"I guess not. We would very much prefer to build a mill and build it in a way that we believe to be correct, and give a firm the time they want to pay for it, than to build a less complete and less satisfactory mill and take less paper. We believe that the former method will yield a smaller proportion of losses in the end."

"Well, there may be something in that," said Dick. "When a man will put up money on his ideas he generally believes in them."

But they were not ready to buy from him at this time. After he had gone Moore said :

"Did you ever think, Dick, that if we spend much money for his machinery we won't have any left to buy wheat with?"

"Well, I guess that's so, but I expect we'll have to work it somehow. There doesn't seem to be any choice in the matter of building roller mills."

In a day or two they had another call from a mill-builder. He was very familiar in his manner, and he said:

"Now, boys, I'll tell you what to do. I have just fixed them up down below here and got them started, and they've got just as nice a running mill as ever you saw—selling their flour right along at good prices, and they ain't got but four breaks and three pairs of smooth rolls, and their millstones that they grind their middlings on. We can fix you up without costing you much." All you want is two more breaks on the corrugated rolls, and the two scalpers, and you are all fixed. You've got everything you want for a year or two at least. Then if you want to put in another break, why put her in."

"That seems a pretty cheap way of getting a gradual reduction mill," said Moore.

"Yes, it's a cheap way and it's a good way. I'm not one of these kind of people that believes in filling a mill so full of machinery that there is no room to get around, and having so many spouts and elevators, and one thing and another, the stock gets lost."

He laughed big at this statement, and looked around for Moore and Herrick to laugh with him, which they did in a mild, sympathetic sort of a way.

The pressure to improve their flour and put in the rolls was getting stronger all the time. Their commission merchant in New York advised it more strongly every time he wrote. He told them of the splendid prices that the people were getting for their flour who were making it in this way. Their agent in Boston reported the same thing, and said he was afraid that he would lose some of their best trade if something was not done. They then had another talk all around with the people who had visited them before, and Moore was inclined to favor one of the cheaper plans of changing the mill. Dick was not. He said:

"I'd be very glad to get out of making a change if I could. I'm not at all anxious to go any more in debt than we are now, but if we have to do it I believe in taking what appears to be the best, and what we'll get our money out of the quickest, and I believe that the best mill that we can build on the new system is what we want."

There was some little talk on this subject between the partners, and finally Moore said:

"This milling business is a pretty hard business. It has always looked as though it was making money ever since I've been in it, excepting, possibly, for a little time there when we had our milling mixed up—and, on the whole, we've made money every year since I've been

in the business, and sometimes it looks as if we were making it big. But notwithstanding the money you've put in here, Dick, there's more debt hanging over this mill and me than there was the day I bought into it. On general principles we've made money right along, but as a matter of fact we've had to spend it as fast as we've made it, and now we've got to go into it deeper than ever."

"That's all so," said Dick, "but there's no way out of it, so I think we'll have to hope that this is the last change that we'll have to make, and try to make it the last one by making it as complete as possible. L— & Co. seem to be building the best mills that are going up, and as they are inclined to sell us all the machinery we want and put it in and take our paper for it, I expect we had better do business with them."

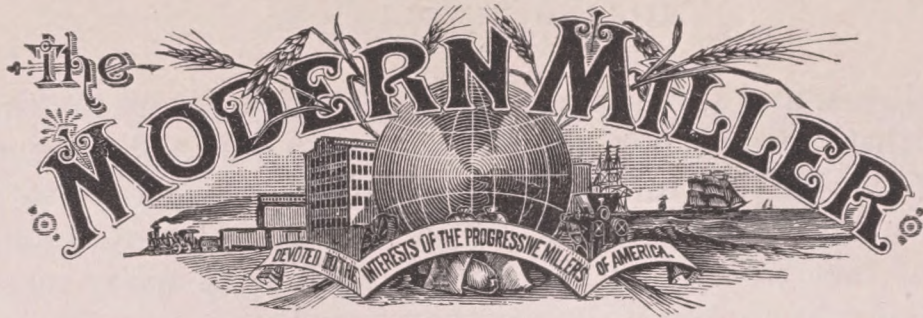
And so they did. They built what proved to be a first-class roller mill. As with all mills, there had to be a few changes made after it was started, but it was complete, the general principles were all correct, and the mill started again to reduce its debt.

The mills which made changes by dropping in a few pairs of rolls on the grinding floor were not competitors of Moore & Co. Such mills were continually spending money and putting in cheap machinery in a cheap way in order to compete with their more successful neighbor. There are those who can always find a cheap machine which is warranted to do the work of something more complete. Such millers are the great contributors to the scrap piles. They serve to keep down the price of that kind of stock.

* * * * *

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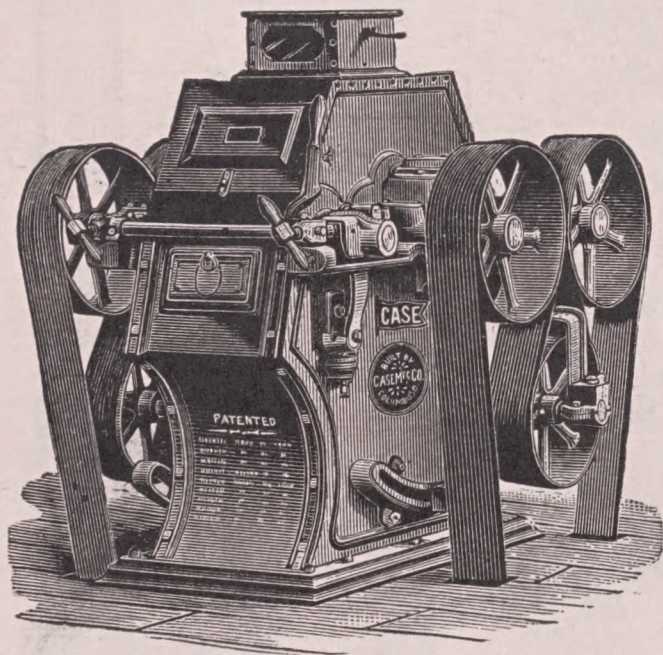
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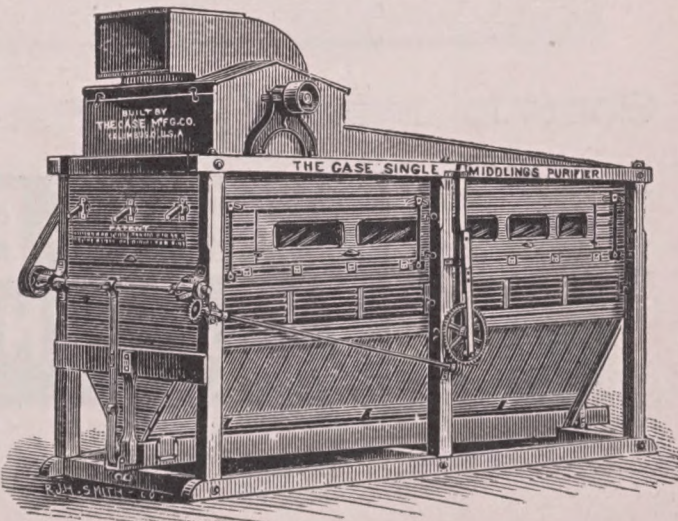
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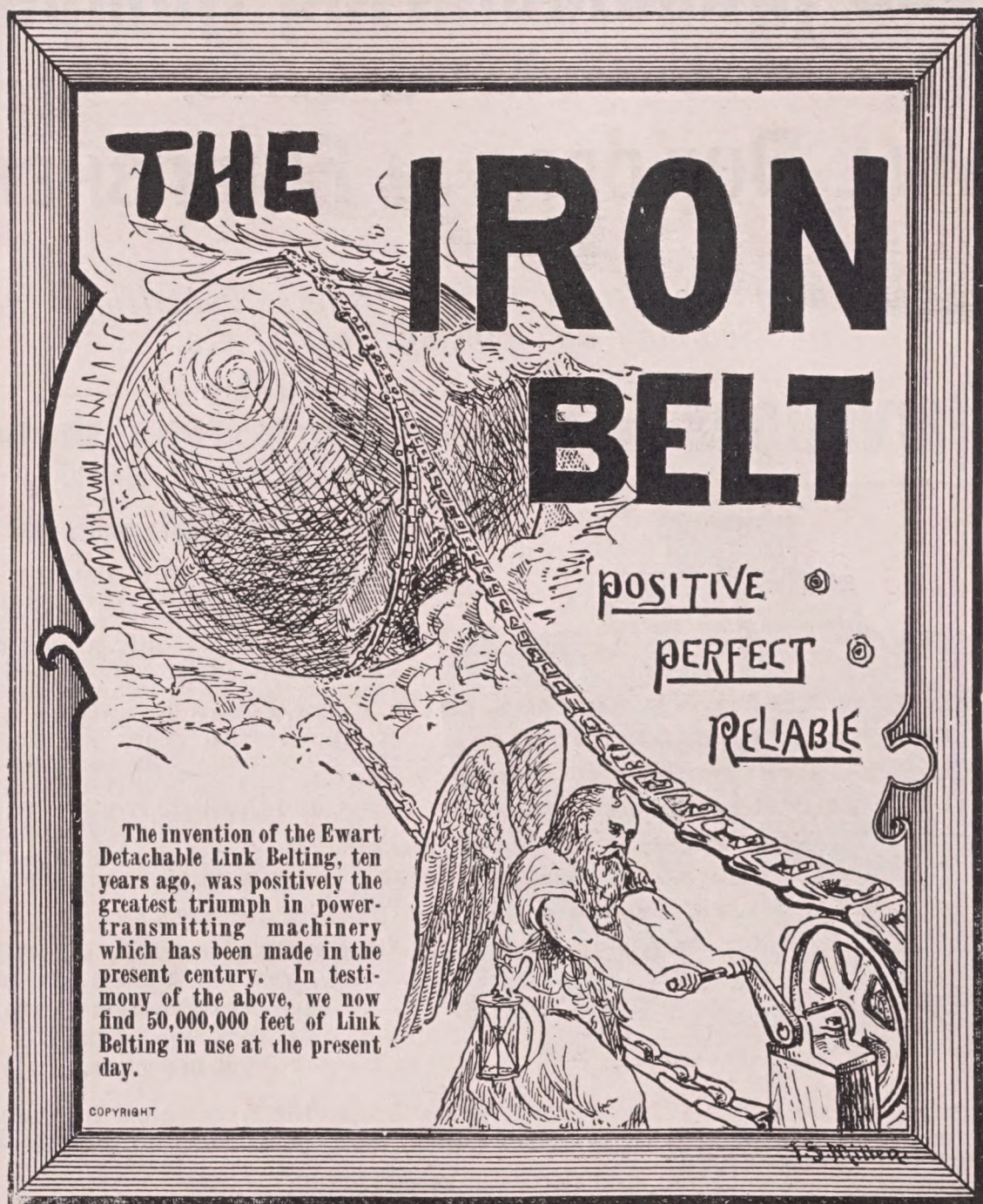
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



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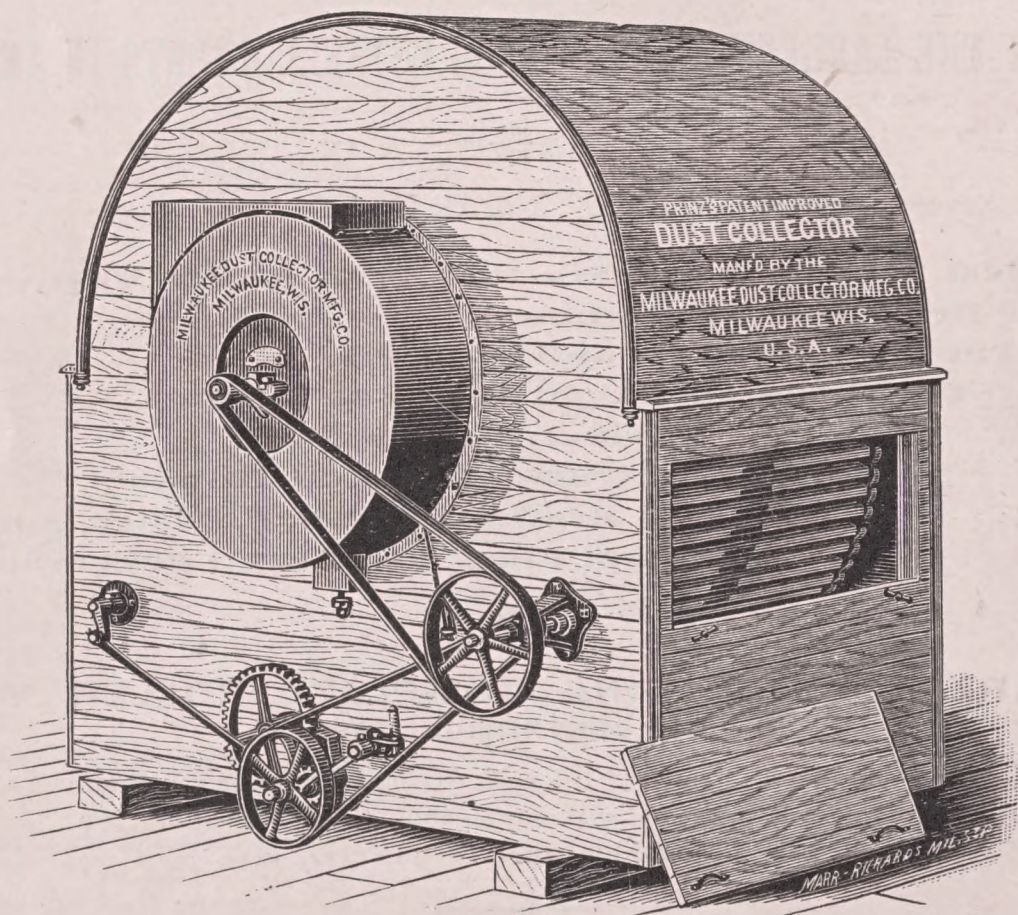
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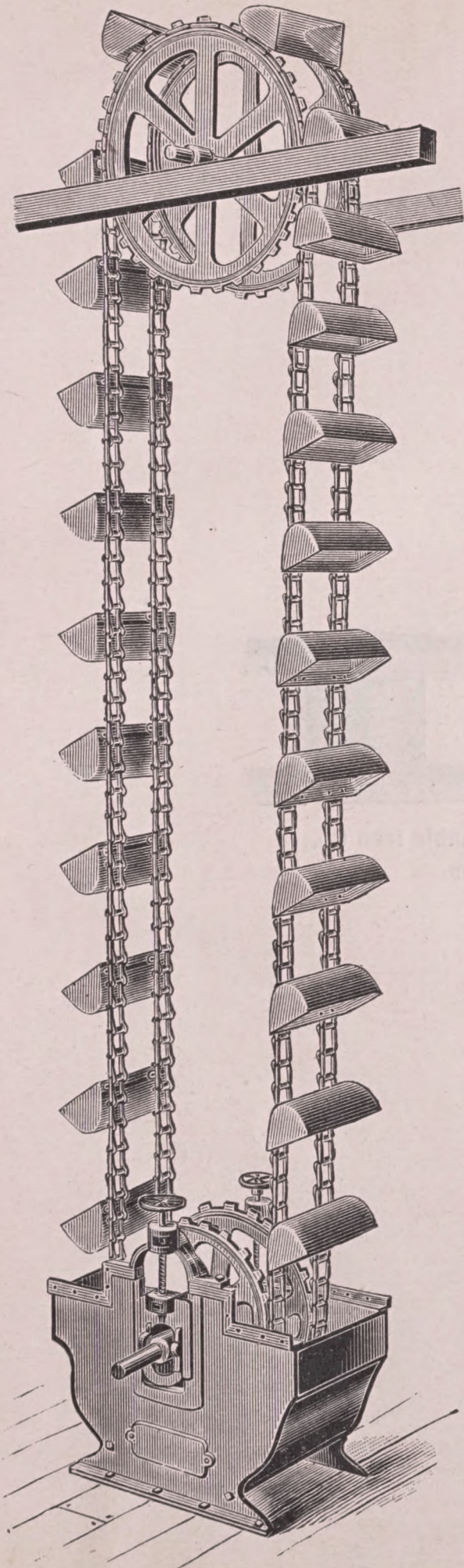
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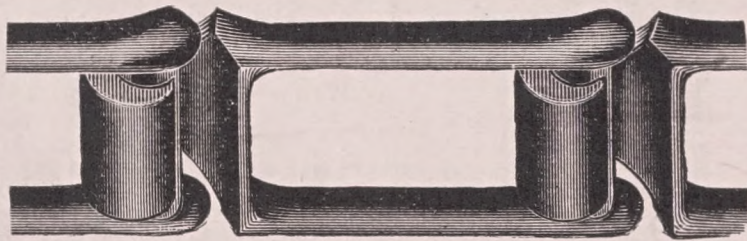
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